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ABSTRACT

The Eisenhower Foundation developed and produced posters and curriculum materials for "Dreams of a Barefoot Boy: 1890-1911," the first in a series that examines, in depth, the life and times of Dwight D. Eisenhower, the 34th U.S. President. This collection of primary source documents consists of documents with social themes relating to: Eisenhower's home and family; his school and education; his church and religion; his work, play, and entertainment; and his community. It is important for that students continue to learn about Dwight D. Eisenhower, a person who dominated his times as few others have and emerged as one of the giants of the 20th century. The collection addresses national standards for history (K-4), including standards in historical thinking, for historical comprehension, historical analysis and interpretation, historical research capabilities, and historical issues analysis and decision making. It addresses standards which deal with community life, history of the state, and democratic principles within the United States. It provides a sample sheet for student evaluation of the primary source read. The teacher's guide contains: information for teacher preparation; learning objectives; and National Standards for History information. (BT)

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ED 469 556

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

SO 034 317

Dreams of a Barefoot Boy:

1890--1911

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dwight D. Eisenhower—the man, the hero, the leader of the free world—provided the inspiration and substance for this project. His many achievements epitomize the very fulfillment of our still-cherished American Dream. His depth of character and fine example reflect the highest attainment of our nation's democratic and cultural ideals. As a native of Dwight D. Eisenhower's beloved Abilene, it has been both a singular honor and a sobering undertaking to introduce him to a generation of young Americans who never knew him, but have much to learn from him.

This project became a reality due to the support and efforts of many. Through the generous financial support of the Annenberg Foundation and the State of Kansas, The Eisenhower Foundation developed and produced the posters and curriculum for "Dream of a Barefoot Boy: 1890—1911," the first in a series that examines, in depth, the life and times of Dwight D. Eisenhower, our 34th President.

How does one adequately recognize and thank all those who helped at every stage in the development of this project? They guided my research; located documents and photographs; retyped endless pages of oral histories; scanned a mountain of materials and assembled them onto the web site; edited and proofed the project; and prepared it for mailing to schools across Kansas and the United States. Here, I would like to express my profound appreciation for their dedication, labor, and warm collegiality. Certainly, without the expertise, professionalism, and goodwill of the Director, Assistant Director, staff and volunteers of the Eisenhower Center, "Dreams of a Barefoot Boy" would never have been completed.

"Dreams of a Barefoot Boy: 1890—1911" was created under the aegis and with the impetus of the Board of Directors, President, and Executive Director of The Eisenhower Foundation. Their faith in my ability, encouragement in my efforts, and trust in my judgments made my work a personal joy and a source of immense professional satisfaction. It is my sincerest wish that the impact of this project will be a worthy first step in the revitalization of the legacy of Dwight D. Eisenhower, an extraordinary American.

Kim E. Barbieri
Education Specialist
The Eisenhower Foundation

Cover: Growing up, Dwight Eisenhower and his friends enjoyed camping trips along the Smoky Hill River and the streams of Dickinson County, Kansas. Dwight was often the organizer and chief cook for the group. This particular photograph was taken in 1907 along the Smoky Hill River.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HISTORY

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER: **Dreams of a Barefoot Boy** addresses the following national standards for history through its background material, primary sources, learning activities, and readings from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends.* It is particularly supportive in developing an understanding of historical thinking.

National Standards for History (K-4):

- Standards in Historical Thinking:
  - Standard 1. Chronological Thinking
    - A. Distinguish between past, present, and future time.
    - B. Identify the temporal structure of a historical narrative or story.
    - C. Establish temporal order in constructing students' own historical narratives.
    - D. Measure and calculate calendar time.
    - E. Interpret data presented in time lines.
    - F. Create time lines.
    - G. Explain change and continuity over time.

  - Standard 2. Historical Comprehension
    - A. Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative.
    - B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage.
    - C. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses.
    - D. Read historical narratives imaginatively.
    - E. Appreciate historical perspectives
    - F. Draw upon data in historical maps.
    - H. Draw upon the visual data presented in photographs, paintings, cartoons, and architectural drawings.

  - Standard 3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
    - A. Formulate questions to focus their inquiry or analysis
    - B. Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas, values, personalities, behaviors, and institutions.
    - E. Compare different stories about a historical figure, era, or event.
    - F. Analyze illustrations in historical stories.
    - G. Consider multiple perspectives.
    - H. Explain causes I analyzing historical actions.
    - I. Hypothesize influences of the past.

  - Standard 4. Historical Research Capabilities
    - A. Formulate historical questions.
    - B. Obtain historical data.
    - C. Interrogate historical data.
    - D. Marshal needed knowledge of the time and place, and construct a story, explanation, or historical narrative.

Standard 5. Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making
- A. Identify problems and dilemmas in the past.
- B. Analyze the interests and values of the various people involved.
- C. Identify causes of the problem or dilemma.
- D. Propose alternative choices for addressing the problem.
- E. Formulate a position or course of action on an issue.
- F. Identify the solution chosen.
- G. Evaluate the consequences of a decision.

Standards in History for Grades K-4:

Topic 1: Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago

Standard 1: Family life now and in the recent past; family life in various places long ago.

1A: The student understands family life now and in the recent past; family life in various places long ago.

Standard 2: The history of students' own local community and how communities in North America varied long ago.

2A: The student understands the history of his or her local community.

Topic 2: The History of Students' Own State or Region

Standard 3: The people, events, problems, and ideas that created the history of their state.

3B: The student understands the history of the first European, African, and/or Asian-Pacific explorers and settlers who came to his or her state or region.

Topic 3: The History of the United States: Democratic Principles and Values and the People from Many Cultures Who Contributed to Its Cultural, Economic, and Political Heritage

Standard 4: How democratic values came to be, and how they have been exemplified by people, events, and symbols.

4B: The students understands ordinary people who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.

Standard 5: The causes and nature of various movements of large groups of people into and within the United States, now, and long ago.

5A: The student understands the movements of large groups of people into his or her own and other states in the United States now and long ago.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
1890--1911

Name____________________________
Date____________________________

EVALUATE A PRIMARY SOURCE

1. Which selection from “Dreams of a Barefoot Boy” did you just read? ____________________
____

2. What did you learn about life in a Midwestern town in 1900?____________________
____
____

3. Write three questions about life in 1900 that were not answered in the reading selection.
   a. ____
   b. ____
   c. ____

4. Look at the document you’ve been given. *What* type of primary source is it?
   ____official record
   ____letter
   ____diary/journal
   ____reminiscence
   ____oral history
   ____photograph/film
   ____map
   ____artwork
   ____advertisement
   ____newspaper
   ____cartoon
   ____poster
   ____sound recording
   ____artifact
   ____book

5. Carefully examine the document and describe what you see (dates, stamps, names, notations, numbers, symbols, etc.). ____
____
____
____

6. *Who* created this document? ____

7. *Why* do you think this document was created? ____
____

8. For *whom* was this document intended? ____

9. List three things you learned about life at this time in history by studying this document.
   a. ____
   b. ____
   c. ____

10. Write three new questions that you now have about the subject.
   a. ____
   b. ____
   c. ____

*This worksheet was modified from the original developed by the Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408.

Primary Sources: Dreams of a Barefoot Boy

Home & Family

Birth Record, Family Bible, (museum?) (AV has photo, # 68-81)

1905 Letter to Nettie Stover from DDE (AV has photo, #73-374) (Note: might want to use original for scanning?)

Milton Eisenhower Oral History, pp. 1-4, pp.17(?)—19, pp. 23-24

Rev. Ray I. Witter Oral History, pp. 23-25, p. 29

L. J. Asper Oral History, p. 2, pp.16-17

Nettie Stover Jackson Oral Histoy, p. 17, p. 20, pp. 23-26, pp. 36-39

Recipes from Ida Stover Eisenhower, "Puddin' " and "Paun Haas"

Recipes from DDE, "Chile Con Carne" and "Old-Fashioned Beef Stew"

Diagram of Eisenhower Yard—1898, Endacott Records (Scan my copy.)

Diagram of Eisenhower Yard—1947, Endacott Records (Scan my copy.)

Water Permit (1907) for Eisenhower home, Endacott Records (Do we have the original?)

Application for Sewer Permit (1908) for Eisenhower home, Endacott Records (Do we have the original?)

Photos:

- Can't find photo #, Unidentified group (probably Eisenhower extended family) of 5 men, two little boys, little girl, and (DDE and David Eisenhower) c. 1906-07
- 64-172 David, Idea, 3 of Eisenhower sons, and DDE's dog, Flip
- 64-167-2 Four Eisenhower brothers (Arthur, Edgar, Dwight, and Roy) 1893
- 62-319 David, Ida, and all six boys, 1902
- 62-319-A DDE, cropped from above photo
- 62-296 House on 2nd St. with four boys out front (Arthur, Edgar, Dwight, and Paul) 1895-96? (Note: Paul died in 1896)
- Get exterior and interior photos of the Eisenhower home from the museum

School & Education

DDE's High School Diploma (museum) (AV has photo of it, #63-32)

Orin Snider Oral History, pp. 2-4, p. 6, pp. 23-25, p. 28, pp. 34-36, pp. 44-47

Six McDonnell Oral History, pp. 10-11

Lelia Grace Picking Oral History, pp. 2-3, pp. 7-10

John E. Long letter of March 6, 1970, (reminiscence), pp. 4-6.

The First Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside cover page with this written in: Mary Smith, Sept. 12, 1903
- Inside cover with illustration and title page
- Lesson XXXVIII, What We Have Read About, p. 100
- From the Authors to the Teacher and Language Lessons, pp. 1-3

The Second Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside cover with illustration and title page
- Lesson II and Lesson III and Lesson IV, pp. 8-11

The Third Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside front cover page with this written in: Edith Cranston, 1896, Abilene, Kansas
- Lesson I, pp. 4-5
- Inside back cover page with: drawings and Edith Cranston, etc.

The Fourth Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside cover page with illustration and title page
- IX.—Dan's Bull-fight, pp.31-33
- Appendix: Words Difficult to Spell, p. 287

The Fifth Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside cover page with illustration and title page
- The Preparatory Notes, p. 1
- VII.—The Battle of the Ants, pp. 27-30

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1906 (no pages numbers) Note: Very Fragile

- Course of Study page
- Freshman Toast page (DDE as a freshman)
- Year Calendar page

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1907 (no page numbers in the yearbook)

- High School Faculty page
- High School Orchestra page (Ruby Nelson)
- Sophomore Class page (DDE as a sophomore)
- Sophomore Class page (Motto, Colors, etc.)

- Sophomore Toast page
- School Commandments, Rules and Regulations for Freshman page
- Year Calendar page

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1908, (no page numbers in the yearbook)
- The Junior Class page (DDE as a junior)
- Junior Organization page
- Interior Views of the New High School page
- The Football Team page (photo, Games and Score)
- The Baseball Team (photo, Games and Score)

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1909, (no page numbers in the yearbook)
- Senior Class page with DDE's photo
- Class Prophecy pages (2)
- Senior Organization page (Class Motto, Colors, Flower, Yell, and Officers)
- Class Night Program and Class Play page
- Officers Athletic Association (photo of DDE)
- Athletics by Dwight Eisenhower page
- Abilene High School Base Ball Team (photo)

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1910
- Seniors, p. 15 and 17 (DDE's girlfriends: Gladys Harding, Myrtle Hoffnell, Ruby Nelson)
- A Little into Next Year, p. 27
- Just a Senior Foot Note, p. 60

Photos:

70-255-3	Garfield School
70-255-2	City Building (High School until 1907)
64-320	DDE's 5th grade class at Lincoln (same as 64-321?)
64-321	Emma Wolfe's class (grade?)
62-188-2	DDE's 7th grade class at Garfield
64-380	Class Photo (freshman?)
67-577A	Cropped photo of DDE and student body in front of High School, 1909

Church & Religion

1906 Souvenir Report, Brethren Sunday School (Located at the Heritage Center: See about getting the original for scanning.)

Belle Springs Post Office Application (Located at the Heritage Center. See about using the original for scanning.)

John Long's letter (handwritten), pp. 1-2, to Earl Endacott, March 6, 1970: Home and Family Appendix F (2), Endacott Records.

John Long's reminiscence (attached to above letter), pp. 2-3, March 6, 1970: Home and Family Appendix F (2), Endacott Records.

Rev. Ray I. Witter Oral History, pp. 3-4, p. 7, pp. 9-11 pp. 21-23, pp. 28-29, pp. 35-40.

Possibly locate another example or two of church records in Abilene in 1900.

Photos:

- 64-182 The Gospel Wagon (Uncle Abe Eisenhower)
- Brethren in Christ Church, Abilene (Try to locate at the Heritage Center.)
- Belle Springs Brethren in Christ Church (Try to locate at the Heritage Center.)
- 70-255-5 PC Lutheran Church (double check this)
- Locate photos of other churches and/or congregations in Abilene in 1900

Work, Play & Entertainment

Swede Hazlett letter (reminiscence), 23 May 1944, pp. 1-3

Orin Snider Oral History, pp. 39-40

Ivan M. Fitzwater Oral History, pp. 7-9, pp. 11-13, pp. 42-44

L. J. Asper Oral History, p. 1, pp. 4-7, p. 15

Mrs. Robert J. Long Oral History, second-to-last page

Rev. Ray I. Witter Oral History, pp. 19-21, pp. 23-24, pp. 24-27

Abram Forney Oral History, pp. 9-10

Photos:

64-165-B	Camping Trip to Woodbine
77-18-3	Class party (graduation?), 1908-09
66-66	With friends at Brown's Park, south of Abilene
64-165	Camping Trip on the Smoky Hill River, 1904-07
73-503-2 D	Picnic at the New Fairgrounds (where they are now) around 1900
73-509-3	Abilene Corn Carnival, 1899
73-508-1	Abilene Baseball Band, 1900
73-508-6	The Merchants' Military Band, 1896
70-255-6	Mud Creek? (Very likely) approximately 1905
64-481	Belle Springs Creamery, 1902
70-255-12	Belle Springs Creamery, approximately 1905
64-482-A	Belle Springs Creamery, 1908
64-482-B	Belle Springs Creamery, 1908
64-481-B	Belle Spring Creamery, 1908
70-255-11	Seelye Theater, approximately 1905

Community

Stewart Verckler (newspaper) Abstracts for 1900, pp. 1-6

Abilene Weekly Reflector
- 1/12/99, p. 7, "Statement of Conditions" (cut and paste before scanning)
- 1/19/99, p. 1, "Declared Insane"
- 6/15/99, p. 8, "Exceptional Shoe Bargains"
- 1/12/99, p. 6, Grocery ad
- 6/22/99, p. 1, "Death's Sad Summons"
- 6/15/99, p. 10, "Early June Weddings…" Amsden-Parker (cut and paste before scanning)
- 6/22/99, p. 2, "Farms"
- 6/22/99, p. 2, "Abilene Residences"
- 1/5/99, p. 11, "Railway Time Tables"

Ivan M. Fitzwater Oral History, pp. 4-7, pp. 9-11, pp. 44-45

Orin Snider Oral History, p. 15, pp. 18-19, pp. 33-34

John F. "Six" McDonnell Oral History, pp. 20-22, pp. 52-53

Abram Forney Oral History, p. 6

Standard Atlas of Dickinson Country, KS 1901 (Abilene) Located at the Heritage Center.
(Need to take to copy at Kinko's. I don't know if we can scan this size? Perhaps Kinko's can?)

Plat Book and Complete Survey of Dickinson County, KS (Grant Township) 1909 (Probably good enough for scanning. The original is at the Heritage Center.)

Abilene City Directory (with phone book) 1904-04
cover, p. 1, p. 2, pp. 112-115, p. 122-23, pp. 70-71

Andreas History of Kansas, 1883, pp. 46-47 (See about scanning original from Heritage Center)

John Long reminiscence, March 21, 1966, pp. 6-8, Home and Family file, Endacott Records

Map, Boyhood Environmental Area Home, p. 38, Home and Family file, Endacott Records

Eisenhower's West Point Recommendations (Ed Howe's reminiscence), p. 45, Home and Family file, Endacott Records

DDE's 1909 democratic speech (Newspaper account is in the Vertical File, "DDE Boyhood"

Photos:

70-255-1	Dickinson County Court House, approximately 1905
70-255-4	Abilene, looking east on 3rd, approximately 1905

70-255-7	Abilene, looking southwest on 3rd and Broadway, approx. 1905
70-255-8	Abilene, Perhaps the St. Joseph Academy? (identify for certain), approx. 1905
70-255-9	Abilene, looking west on 3rd, approx. 1905
70-255-10	Abilene, (perhaps on south 2nd facing train depot?) approx. 1905
70-255-11	Abilene, approx 1905
70-255-13	Abilene, approx. 1905
73-509	Abilene, Flood of 1903
73-509-4 D	Abilene, Dust Storm, early 1900s
73-509-3 D	Abilene, Corn Carnival, Oct. 12, 1899
73-509-1	Abilene, Lodge Officers, 1896?
73-502-3 D	Abilene, early 1900s
My photo	Abilene in 1911, downtown on west side of Cedar St.,

"To Get Our Hands On Every Cent We Could Possibly Earn"

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In the furnace room there were three large fir-tube boilers. We used slack (almost powdered) coal and clinkers formed With a slice bar, twelve feet or so in length, I would push the burning coal to one side,, loosen the clinkers from the grates, then haul them out with a hoelike tool while another man turned a stream of water on the clinker. In this small inferno, life lost its charm but the job led to another promotion.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Children and young people in the early years of the twentieth century worked and played much the same as they do today. Early in life, children learned the value of work firsthand. "These were the days when children had *real* [emphasis added] chores to do and did them as a matter of course."[1] Children learned how to cook, wash and dry dishes, and clean. They helped to wash, hang, and iron laundry as a matter of course. Out of doors, children were responsible for the care of pets and livestock.
Stalls and pens needed cleaning; the garden, hoed and weeded; and the cow, milked twice a day. Local farmers or small business owners hired older boys to work in the summer. Many jobs required long hours of physical toil for very modest pay. During the school year, some students had after-school jobs in downtown stores. When they were old enough to be capable of carrying out their duties, some girls worked as "hired girls," doing household chores for another family in exchange for room, board, and a small wage.

Life for children in 1900 wasn't all work. After chores and schoolwork were finished, children enjoyed play and having fun. Most little girls had a rag doll and perhaps a "penny" doll: a miniature china doll. "Nickel" dolls were larger and nicer. One popular brand of oatmeal contained a printed, cloth doll in the box that mothers sewed and stuffed for their daughters. Every little girls dreamed of receiving a life-sized doll with a porcelain head, real hair and lashes, and movable eyes. Little boys preferred a cloth bag of prized marbles which they carried around in their pockets. On the first warm day of spring, they gathered outside, testing their skill at marbles with their friends. Older boys were allowed to carry jackknives and competed at a game called "Mumblety-peg" where they turns flipping the knife blades into the ground.

Outside games were as popular as they are today. Children organized themselves to play "hide-and-seek," "ring-around-a-rosy," "drop-the-handkerchief," and "follow-the-leader." Baseball was not considered a proper game for girls; however, it was a favorite sport for boys, along with football, boxing, wrestling, and foot races. The

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hayloft in the barn out back was the perfect place to practice gymnastics and put on amateur shows and circuses.

This was a time when children freely explored the countryside in search of fun and adventure. In the summer, the local creek became the community swimming hole and, in winter, an ice-skating rink. Homemade kites flew in the summer sky and many Sunday-afternoon, horse-and-buggy rides ended with a river-side picnic. The river was a perfect setting for fishing, boating, and camping. Hikes and hayrides were other typical outdoor activities in pleasant weather. When there was enough snow in the winter, children hitched their sleds behind a wagon or horse and thrilled to a slippery ride down country roads.

As early as 1890, every town had at least one drugstore with a soda fountain or ice cream parlor. Young people met their friends "downtown" for sodas, sundaes, and malted milks; already American favorites. Another popular activity for young people was to hang out at one another's homes. In the evenings, all gathered around the piano or organ in the parlor for a sing-along to the musical hits of the day.

"Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight," "Whippoorwill Song," and "Over the Garden Wall" were among the most requested.

Every town had at least one band; most had several. By far, this was the most popular of all local music entertainment. Dazzling uniforms, the flash of silver instruments, and snappy high-stepping marches were a reflection of the town's own spirit and pride.

Progressive towns boasted an Opera House where traveling troupes performed plays, musicals, and light opera for the locals. By the early 1900s, opera houses were converted to movie theaters at a rapid pace. It was the age of the three-reel, silent picture. Regular admission was 15 to 40 cents, but most fans waited for the Saturday ten-cent matinee to view such blockbusters as "Trip to the Moon" and "The Great Train Robbery."

County fairs and carnivals featured exhibits, horse races, pulling contests, hot-air balloons, and the infamous midway. The occasional medicine show that pulled into town was a sure magnet for a curious, and sometimes gullible crowd. Summer chautauqua shows enticed the community to a week of lectures, speeches, and musical performances. Nothing, however, compared with the glamour of the circus. "The circus was India, Arabia, and the jungles"[1] to Midwesterners who had limited contact with the outside world. Exotic animals, death-defying acts, chariots, and a downtown parade, made the day the circus came to town a major event in small town life.

When Dwight Eisenhower was growing up in Abilene, Kansas, the greater part of the ordinary person's day was spent working. Life was no different for the Eisenhower family. As soon as her sons were able to help, Ida devised a weekly schedule of rotating chores. That way, each boy learned every job in the busy household. Because there were no Eisenhower daughters, even what were traditionally "girls" chores like cooking and sewing were mastered by the six sons. After school and in the summers, Dwight and his brothers worked at a variety of jobs including farm and factory work. With his earnings he bought treats, athletic equipment, and took dates to the "picture show" at the Seeyle Theater.

After high school graduation, Dwight

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[1] Lewis Atherton, Main Street on the Middle Border, p. 131.

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began working fulltime at the Belle Springs Creamery. He and brother Edgar devised a plan to put each other through college. Dwight would remain in Abilene to work and pay for his brother's education. After a couple of years, Ed would drop out to work for a time so Dwight could attend college.

Like young people today, Dwight enjoyed himself when he had the time. He thrilled at pistol-shooting contests down at Mud Creek by men who actually knew Wild Bill Hickok. Now and then, they allowed him to practice. Baseball and football were Dwight's passion and he enjoyed boxing and working out in a make-shift gym at the back of a print shop downtown. He and his friends swam and skated at nearby Mud Creek. With Bob Davis, as guide and teacher, Dwight fished, flat-boat paddled, camped, and learned how to win at poker on the Smoky Hill River. W.C. Parker's Amusement Company and Carnival were only a few blocks from his home, but the people and activity of downtown Abilene were often entertainment enough for a small-town boy growing up at the turn of the century.

Recommended Reading from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*: 73-75, 68-71, 83-86, 88-92, 94-95, 97-98, 102-104.

HOME & FAMILY

> *Mother and Father maintained a genuine partnership in raising their six sons. Father was the breadwinner, Supreme Court, and Lord High Executioner. Mother was tutor and manager of our household. Their partnership was ideal . . . Before their children, they were not demonstrative in their love for each other, but a quiet, mutual devotion permeated our home. This had its lasting effect on all the boys.*
>
> –Dwight D. Eisenhower

In the small, Midwestern town of 1900, the extended family was society's primary unit. Its members were responsible for the welfare of all and everyone could be counted on to help in difficult times. Whether it was misfortune, illness, or death, it was the family that responded. Neighbors and friends were an additional source of help and support. For people of this era, to have sought charity outside the family would have been a disgrace. To be of "good" family—one that reflected the accepted values of the community—was a title worthy of respect in the town.

By today's standards, families were nearly self-sufficient in providing the necessities of life. For many, hard cash may have been scarce; however, most people had adequate clothing, reasonably-comfortable homes and, in ordinary times, an abundance of homegrown food. Every back yard boasted a vegetable garden and chicken pen, a source of fresh food with plenty more to "put up" in the cellar. Anything extra could be sold for pocket money.

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Boys grew up expecting that they would marry and support a wife and children. Girls were raised to view marriage and motherhood as their life's goal. For a young woman, to fail to marry was to be doomed forever to be an "old maid": the object of pity. It was common for extended family members—generally grandparents or unmarried aunts or uncles—to live with relatives. And, if an unfortunate husband or wife was widowed, a minimum of one year of mourning was considered proper before remarriage.

The well-being of the family unit was of far greater concern than the desires of any individual. For this reason, each family member had a role that he or she was expected to fulfill. For example, the husband was undisputed head of the family and chief wage earner. Men expected to work at least 12 hours a day, six days a week, at hard physical labor for very modest pay. Many wives supplemented the family income with "egg and butter" money.

Women were at the center of the family and home. Large families were the rule, demanding creativity and hard work from women. How well a wife and mother carried out her duties of housekeeping, cooking, and laundry was critical to her reputation in the community. Women kept a garden, cared for poultry, made butter, and preserved produce from the garden. All the family's clothing and most of the bedding was sewn by women. Out of necessity, women were skilled practitioners of home medicinal remedies. Every housewife knew that a sore throat required a mixture of turpentine and lard rubbed onto the throat, which was then wrapped with a woolen cloth. To help with the never-ending household tasks, a "hired girl" often lived with the family at a reasonable cost of $1.50--$2.00 a week.

A Day for Everything

Monday—washing
Tuesday—ironing
Wednesday—sewing
Thursday—gardening
Friday—cleaning
Saturday—baking
Sunday—go to church

In 1900, the role of children in the family was different from today. This was an age when, above all else, unquestioned obedience to parents and authority figures was expected. Society supported the view that children were to be "seen and not heard." Mother was the disciplinarian of first resort, but it was father who was the much-feared force of reckoning. The philosophy of "spare the rod and spoil the child" was a universally-accepted belief in homes in 1900.

The typical home in 1900 had two stories with high ceilings and a wide front porch. Homes reflected a preference for Victorian decoration and furnishings. Dark, rich colors covered the walls and windows with similarly-colored rugs on polished, wood floors. Dark tables and walls were covered with lace decoration and bric-a-brac. By this time, many homes in town had electricity,

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but unpredictable currents made lighting dim. Each home had a prized front parlor which was furnished with the best the family could afford. Kitchens had a large wood or coal burning stove, a sink, an ice-box, and a large kitchen table. Modern bathtubs in a bathroom were a luxury and most children dreaded the weekly bathing ritual in a large tub on the kitchen floor. Stored in the cellar below the house were bins of apples, onions, and potatoes; and shelves filled with canned fruits and vegetables. Every family tended a vegetable garden and harvested fruit from their own orchards. Even those who lived in town had a barn in the back for the family horse and carriage.

In 1900, the day began with a hearty breakfast of meat, eggs, and potatoes: all fried in lard or butter. Oatmeal with cream, toast or biscuits with homemade butter and jam, was served on the side. The noon meal (dinner) and supper were also large meals. Roast beef, pork, or fried chicken was common with potatoes and gravy, and an assortment of vegetables. Homemade bread and freshly-churned butter rounded out the meal and, for dessert, pie or cake was served. Except for occasional hard candy, junk food was virtually unknown at the turn of the century.

CHURCH & RELIGION

Even by the standard of the day, the Eisenhower home on southeast Fourth Street in Abilene, Kansas, was small, modest, and—with six growing boys underfoot—crowded. From his mother, Ida, Dwight and his brothers learned to cook, clean, and sew. On Sunday, the boys were responsible for family meals entirely. David, their father, worked long hours as a refrigeration engineer at nearby Belle Spring Creamery to support his large family. However, there was never enough money. Ida remade David's old clothes into new garments for the boys and Dwight sometimes had to wear his mother's old, high-top, buttoned shoes to school or go barefoot. To earn money for extras, the Eisenhower boys grew and sold vegetables, door to door. For variety, they made hot tamales from their mother's recipe to sell.

Ida was the enduring influence in their lives. She was a patient teacher and an openly-loving parent who had high standards and lofty expectations for her boys. To their constant delight, she was fun and had a wonderful sense of humor. David was the distant and stern disciplinarian. He was a very formal man and even his work overalls and shirt remained clean and pressed throughout the day. A quiet and studious man, David rarely openly expressed his emotions or affection for his family. In the evenings, he passed the time in the parlor alone, reading and studying. Despite their differences in personality, Idea and David both instilled in their sons the belief that they could become anything they dreamed. All it took was high goals, a good education, and work hard.

Recommended Readings from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*: 36-37, 39-43, 51-53, 68, 76-82, 93-102, 98-99, 104-106.

"Everybody I Knew Went to Church"

The schools were three in number; churches abounded. From memory alone I can identify seven and everybody I knew went to church. (The only exception were people we thought of as the toughs—poolroom sharks, we called them.) Social life was centered around the churches.

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Church picnics, usually held on the riverbank, were an opportunity to gorge on fried chicken, potato salad, and apple pie. The men pitched horseshoes, the women knitted and talked, the youngsters fished, and everyone recovered from the meal.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Sunday morning in the Midwestern town of 1900 echoed with a chorus of peeling church bells—a reminder to the faithful to come to worship. The Sabbath was devoted to church services beginning in the morning with Sunday, followed by the regular service, and ending with an evening service. Everyone dressed in their Sunday-go-to-church clothes and children were on their best behavior even when the sermon was beyond their understanding. Singing hymns was a popular part of the service and among the favorites were: "Beulah Land," "Shall We Gather at the River," and "Sweet Bye and Bye." Midweek, usually Wednesday night, was reserved for the midweek prayer meeting and special church group meetings. "Family worship" was stressed and it was not uncommon to see babies sleeping on the back pews during evening services.

Sunday school began with children gathering in a large group in small chairs for opening exercises of prayer and song then they were excused to classes separated by age or gender. Sunday school teachers prepared a lesson about a Biblical scripture and students took turns reading verses from the Bible.
Younger children enjoyed Bible picture cards and pictures on the walls. Meanwhile, the Sunday school secretary-treasurer moved from class to class to collect an offering. At the conclusion, classes were brought together again to announce attendance and the amount collected in the offering. Another hymn was sung, a final pray offered, and Sunday school was dismissed. Adults often attended their own Sunday school where they studied maps of the Holy Land and versus from the Bible.

Town promoters boasted the number and variety of the communities churches. Most churches were protestant and represented the many protestant denominations—a reflection of the population. As a result, most churches had small congregations that had difficulty supporting the costs of a building and the salary of a minister. A congregation of 1000 was necessary to financially support one church; most communities had a church for every 237 people. From time to time, there were efforts by some to promote the idea of a "community" church—a merging of various denominations—but it never gathered enough support to become a reality. There was little real rivalry among the many churches and if the family's church didn't have a Sunday school, no one thought anything about their children attending another.

The vast majority of Midwestern, small-town citizens were middle-class and protestant. It was their religious beliefs which permeated the prevailing code of God-centered, community standards. Few doubted the wisdom of God's "Master Plan" and that everything that happened was for a reason and part of God's great plan. "Belief in God was universal."[1] If a family suffered a death, they sought

[1] Lewis Atherton, Main Street on the Middle Border (Bloomington, IN: University Press), p. 68.

comfort in the understanding that it was "God's will." If misfortunes happened, it was as a seen as a punishment for a lack of faith. The faithful sought to live according to Biblical scripture and prayed for God's help. It was believed that God saw everything a person did—good and bad—and kept an accounting that would be consulted at the end of life. People believed that religion was the underlying strength of a society because devoutness elevated character, improved behavior, and strengthened the family.

The moral code of the middle-class protestant determined certain behaviors and activities to be unacceptable throughout the community. Gambling, card playing, dancing, smoking, and liquor were strictly prohibited. Profanity, immodest dress and behavior received strong societal disapproval. The lower class—termed "ne'er-do-wells" generally ignored the rules of a society they didn't feel a part of and the upper-class suffered no real consequences as long as they did not flaunt violations of proper conduct. In public, all good citizens condemned these evil practices, yet many towns had a saloon for every 200 people in the town—about the same ratio as for churches. Even newspapers printed articles that promoted proper conduct for boys and girls. Respectable young men were to practice personal cleanliness and get to bed early; avoid bad company, drinking, smoking or chewing; attend church; dress and act modestly. To do otherwise was to be a "fast young man." Girls were to act with modesty, seriousness, and thoughtfulness in preparation for marriage and motherhood. Nonetheless, many girls continued their keen interest in clothes and demonstrating the latest slang with risky expressions like: "I thought I should die!" and "Now you're real mean!" One community was particularly concerned about the "bicycle problem"—groups of young people riding bicycles to neighboring towns to visit on Sunday afternoons in clear violation of observing the Sabbath.

> *"The future life was of paramount importance. It was going home to glory. This life was only a preparation; the earth a place where heavenly reward might be earned and justified.*
>
> --D.D.E.

Ministers enjoyed an aura of dignity and respect in the community. Few had a formal education and a minister's salary was meager and undependable, often arriving long after it was due. There were many professional demands. Ministers sometimes performed up to six Sunday services and attended to every detail of a special church event. They performed weddings, baptisms, funerals; made church calls to the bedsides of the sick or dying. Midweek prayer services demanded preparation and they were expected to preside over ice cream socials, W.C.T.U. (Women's Christian Temperance Union) meetings, and holidays like July 4th celebrations and Decoration Day. To supplement their minister's income, parishioners held a yearly donation party and at Christmas, he received Christmas baskets. Small fees were paid for funeral and wedding services and some ministers substitute taught in the local schools.

Small-town ministers had to abide an even stricter code of ethics than did his congregation. There was little or no social life outside church activities. Acceptable associations were lodge activities such as the Odd Fellows, Masons, or Knights of Pythias. Ministers were especially cautious of controversial subjects except those who strong, spiritual or moral messages walls. that They took care to avoid political controversies or face the strong response of the congregation. His job was made more difficult by the fact that members of the congregation were fond of their own interpretations of the scriptures. It was not unusual for a minister to be dominated by a strong personalities of the congregation and. He had his reputation and good example to counter their strength. There was little stability in ministers' tenure; they tended to stay on a few years and then move on.

In 1900, the churches were the center of social life for the community. Church was a proper place for boys to get to meet girls and, then, walk them home after church. Young people's groups like Christian Endeavor and the Epworth League were well attended. Women met for the Ladies Aid or missionary societies and organized fund-raising and social activities. Church festivals presented entertainment programs to raise money and at Church fairs women sold food and auctioned off donated items. Some churches even held lotteries, although there were always complaints. Church picnics and ice cream socials were well-attended summer pastimes and covered-dish or potluck dinners were held year round.

Summer time brought a wave of revival meetings in the Midwest of 1900. Revivals were a yearly event for many churches. Visiting evangelists preached lively, emotion-filled sermons in tents set up on the outskirts of town. Members of the audience took turns "testifying" about their religious experiences and how they had been "saved," encouraging others to come forward to be converted.

By the 1920s and 30s, the role of the church in the community was undergoing challenges. The code of moral behavior was less strict and people were less willing to follow the example of ministers and the churches. The Sabbath was broken for all kinds of sports activities. Some were openly smoking cigarettes and girls under age 18 were going to dances without their mothers as chaperons. There were even church-sponsored dances. Many blamed the aftermath of the Great War (World War I), for the decline of community morality. As well, the church now had much more competition for social activities and technological progress brought the news of the rest of the world to the small, Midwestern town.

Jacob and Rebecca Eisenhower and their children—including Dwight's father, David—came to Dickinson County, Kansas, from the Susquehanna Valley of Pennsylvania in 1879. They were members of a well-organized and prosperous religious migration by a group that called itself the Brethren in Christ. Although they referred to themselves as the "Plain People," they were more commonly known as the River Brethren in Dickinson County. A devout, hard-working, self-sufficient group, they preferred to live in a close knit community Respected throughout the country for their many, fine qualities, their distinctive clothing set them apart in Dickinson County. The men dressed in black and wore black felt hats. They grew heavy beards, without moustaches and wore their hard long and combed back. Women, also, dressed in black, avoiding decoration of any kind. On their heads the women wore a covering called a "prayer veiling" and, when outside the home, they added large, black bonnets with long skirting along the bottom.

In Dickinson County, the River Brethren established three settlements and transformed the prairie into prosperous farms. They are best remembered for the Belle Springs Creamery, founded in 1885 in southern Dickinson County and moved to Abilene in the early 1890s. David

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Eisenhower returned to Abilene with Ida and his three young sons (Dwight then the youngest) in 1892 from Texas to work at the Belle Springs Creamery. For two years following his graduation from high school, to, Dwight worked at the Creamery to earn money to put his brother, Edgar, through college.

SCHOOL
&
EDUCATION

"Education in the Small-Town View"

In the fall of 1896, I entered the Lincoln school, little aware that I was starting on a road in formal education which would not terminate until 1929 when I finished courses at the Army's War College in Washington, D.C. What I learned at the start would not remain static. In the third of a century between my first and last school was compressed a series of revolution—political and economic, social and scientific—which were to transform the human environment of the entire globe.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Going to school in a small, Midwestern town 100 years ago was, in some respects, very different from today; in other, little has changed. The goal of public education, about 1900, was not to prepare young people for a career, as it is today. Rather, students labored to perfect their Spencerian penmanship and they struggled to master the basics of spelling, reading, and "ciphering" (arithmetic)—what we term the "three R's" today. Most members of the community agreed that common sense and hard work rounded out a "good" grammar-school education.

Religious education was a focus of the public school curriculum. The school day began with the teacher reading a Bible verse to the class. McGuffey's popular textbooks were filled with stories and poems that taught religious and moral lessons. Another common theme was "civic virtue," what we call good citizenship today. Parents had a duty to insure a "proper" education for their children and, in turn, obedience and devotion to parents were values that were taught in school.

Classes began at 9:00 in the morning; however, before-school chores began before daylight. Deane Malott, an Abilene boy born to a prosperous, "north side" family in 1898, recalls cleaning the "clinkers" from the furnace; building a fire in the kitchen stove; feeding and currying the horses; feeding the chickens and gathering eggs; cleaning the barn and the henhouse; feeding the dog; hitching up the horse; and practicing the piano—all before leaving for school in the morning. The first bell of the day rang at 8:30. A second, at 9:00, signaled students to line up at the school doors and march, single file, to their classes.

Classrooms were often dark and dreary places that buzzed with the steady hum of student recitations. The competitive spirit of a spelling bee helped to break the monotony

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and a discipline problem for the teacher became lively entertainment for the class. Because school kitchens did not exists, students walked home for lunch and returned for the afternoon session. It wasn't considered proper for boys and girls to share the same playground so they were separated for recess.

By in large, Kansans of 1900 were a literate population; however, relatively few completed a four-year high school education. In the early years of the twentieth century, an eight-grade education was considered adequate and it was certainly no disgrace to leave school after the fifth or sixth grade. High school was, then, largely a female domain because only girls enrolled in the "normal" training program to prepare to teach in rural, one-room schools in the surrounding area. For boys, it was far more practical to get a job, unless they planned to go on to college to become doctors or lawyers. High school was, quite simply, an impractical luxury for many.

High schools offered a choice of four courses of study: college prep, commercial (business), normal training, and an industrial (vocational) track. A typical daily schedule of classes included Latin or German, English, algebra, and physical geography. The teachers and, occasionally, the school superintendent, took turn leading Bible devotions in what was called "chapel." From time to time, the superintendent visited classrooms as a highly-visible deterrent to bad behavior.

Students of this era participated in many of the same activities as high school students today. They wrote and acted in plays and musicals; worked on the yearbook; played an instrument; belonged to a variety of clubs; enrolled in debate; and competed in sports like baseball and football. Basketball was popular with the girls. Neither the school nor citizens took much interest in school athletics. Students who wanted to play a sport bought their own uniforms and personal equipment. Money for other sport-related expenses was raised through meager membership dues and gate receipts.

Teaching wasn't considered a real profession nor did teachers make much money. A college education and professional training were not requirements for grammar school teaching. High school teachers generally had a college degree. In addition to a basic proficiency in the three R's, a teacher was expected to "... whip the bullies into submission ... and hold his own against the district's champion in ciphering and spelling matches."[1] Teachers were expected to be upstanding role models in their communities: demonstrated by regular church attendance and a strict prohibition against participating in card playing, dancing, or profanity. Not surprising, in many communities, the turnover rate for teachers was very high.

Dwight Eisenhower was an intelligent boy who sometimes found school to be dull. Nonetheless, his academic record reveals very respectable grades. In the Eisenhower home, getting a good education was a priority and all six boys were encouraged to go on to college; highly unusual for the time. In grade school, Dwight's favorite subject was spelling, followed closely by arithmetic. His worst subject was penmanship and, throughout his life, he was famous for his indicipherable scrawl. During high school, he excelled at geometry, so much so that his teacher allowed him to develop his own theorems.

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[1] Lewis Atherton, *Main Street on the Middle Border* (Bloomington, IN: University Press), 1954: p. 25.

Dwight's real academic passion was reserved for reading history books, especially ancient history and biographies of famous military men. As a boy, he needed no encouragement to read. In fact, his mother, Ida, finally resorted to locking his books in a cabinet—which he unlocked at his pleasure when he discovered the key—because he read, neglecting his chores. Dwight loved sports, especially football and baseball. At Abilene High School, he resurrected the Athletic Association and worked tirelessly to make it a success. Dwight's ambition for a college education and his willingness to study and work hard changed his life profoundly from what it might have been.

Recommended Reading from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*: 36-37, 39-43, 68, 77-82, 93-102, 98

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HOME & FAMILY

"We Were a Cheerful and a Vital Family"

> *Mother and Father maintained a genuine partnership in raising their six sons. Father was the breadwinner, Supreme Court, and Lord High Executioner. Mother was tutor and manager of our household. Their partnership was ideal . . . . Before their children, they were not demonstrative in their love for each other, but a quiet, mutual devotion permeated our home. This had its lasting effect on all the boys.*
>
> --Dwight D. Eisenhower

In the small, Midwestern town of 1900, the extended family was society's primary unit. Its members were responsible for the welfare of all, and everyone could be counted on to help in difficult times. Whether it was misfortune, illness, or death, it was the family that responded first. For people of this era, to have sought charity outside the family would have been a disgrace. To be of "good" family—one that reflected the accepted values of the community—was a title worthy of respect in the town.

By today's standards, families were nearly self-sufficient in providing the necessities of life. For many, hard cash was scarce; however, most people had adequate clothing, reasonably comfortable homes, and, in ordinary times, an abundance of homegrown food. Every backyard had a vegetable garden and chicken pen, a source of fresh food with plenty more to "put up" in the cellar. Anything extra could be sold for pocket money.

Boys grew up expecting that they would marry and support a wife and children. Girls were raised to view marriage and motherhood as their life's goal. For a young woman, to fail to marry was to be doomed forever to be an "old maid," the object of pity. It was common for extended family members—generally grandparents or unmarried aunts or uncles—to live with relatives. And, if an unfortunate husband or wife were widowed, a minimum of one year of mourning was considered proper before remarriage.

The well-being of the family unit was of far greater concern than the desires of any individual. For this reason, each family member had a role that he or she was expected to fulfill. For example, the husband was undisputed head of the family and chief wage earner. Men expected to work at least twelve hours a day, six days a week, at hard physical labor for very modest pay. Many wives supplemented the family income with "egg and butter" money.

Women were at the center of the family and home. Large families were the rule, demanding creativity and hard work from women. How well a wife and mother carried out her duties of housekeeping, cooking, and laundry was critical to her reputation in the community. Women kept a garden, cared for poultry, made butter, and preserved produce from the garden. All the family's clothing and most of the bedding was sewn by women. Out of necessity, women were skilled practitioners of home medicinal remedies. Every housewife knew that a sore throat required a mixture of turpentine and lard rubbed onto the throat, which was then wrapped with a woolen cloth. To help with the never-ending household tasks, a "hired girl" often lived with the family at a reasonable cost of $1.50--$2.00 a week.

__A Day for Everything__

Monday—washing
Tuesday—ironing
Wednesday—sewing
Thursday—gardening
Friday—cleaning
Saturday—baking
Sunday—go to church

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In 1900, the role of children in the family was different from today's. This was an age when, above all else, unquestioned obedience to parents and authority figures was expected. Society supported the view that children were to be "seen and not heard." Mother was the disciplinarian of first resort, but father was the much feared force of reckoning. The philosophy of "spare the rod and spoil the child" was a universally-accepted belief.

The typical home in 1900 had two stories with high ceilings and a wide front porch. Homes reflected a preference for Victorian decoration and furnishings. Dark, rich colors covered the walls and windows with similarly colored rugs on polished, wood floors. Furniture and walls were covered with lace decoration and bric-a-brac. By this time, many homes in town had electricity, but unpredictable currents made lighting dim. Each home had a prized front parlor, furnished with the best the family could afford, but was rarely used. The focal point of the parlor was the family's "what-not" cabinet which displayed special treasures and mementos. Kitchens had a large wood- or coal-burning stove, a sink, an ice-box, and a large kitchen table. Modern bathtubs in a bathroom were a luxury, and most children dreaded the weekly bathing ritual in a large tub on the kitchen floor. Stored in the cellar below the house were bins of apples, onions, and potatoes and shelves filled with canned fruits and vegetables. Even those who lived in town had a barn in the back for the family horse and carriage.

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Even by the standard of the day, the Eisenhower home on southeast Fourth Street in Abilene, Kansas, was small, modest, and—with six growing boys underfoot—crowded. Ida furnished it sparely and decorated it with her own "fancy work." Out back was the chicken coop and a large family garden with small plots for each of the boys. North of the house was a large barn for the horses and cows where Uncle Abraham Lincoln Eisenhower had set up his veterinary practice when he owned the home.

From their mother, Ida, Dwight and his brothers learned to cook, clean, iron, and sew. On Sunday, the boys were responsible for family meals entirely. David, their father, worked long hours as a refrigeration engineer at nearby Belle Springs Creamery. Still, there was never money enough. Ida recycled David's old clothes for the boys. To his embarrassment, Dwight sometimes had to wear his mother's old high-top, buttoned shoes to school or go barefoot. To earn money for extras, the Eisenhower boys grew and sold vegetables, door to door. For variety, they peddled hot tamales from their mother's Texas recipe.

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David was different. He was the distant and stern disciplinarian. A very formal man, even his work overalls and shirt remained clean and pressed throughout the day. In the evenings, David preferred to sit in the parlor alone, reading.

Despite differences in personality, Ida and David each instilled in their sons a belief that the world was theirs for the taking. All it took was lofty goals, a good education, and hard work.

Recommended Readings from *At Ease*: *Stories I Tell to Friends*: 36-37, 39-43, 51-53, 68, 76-82.

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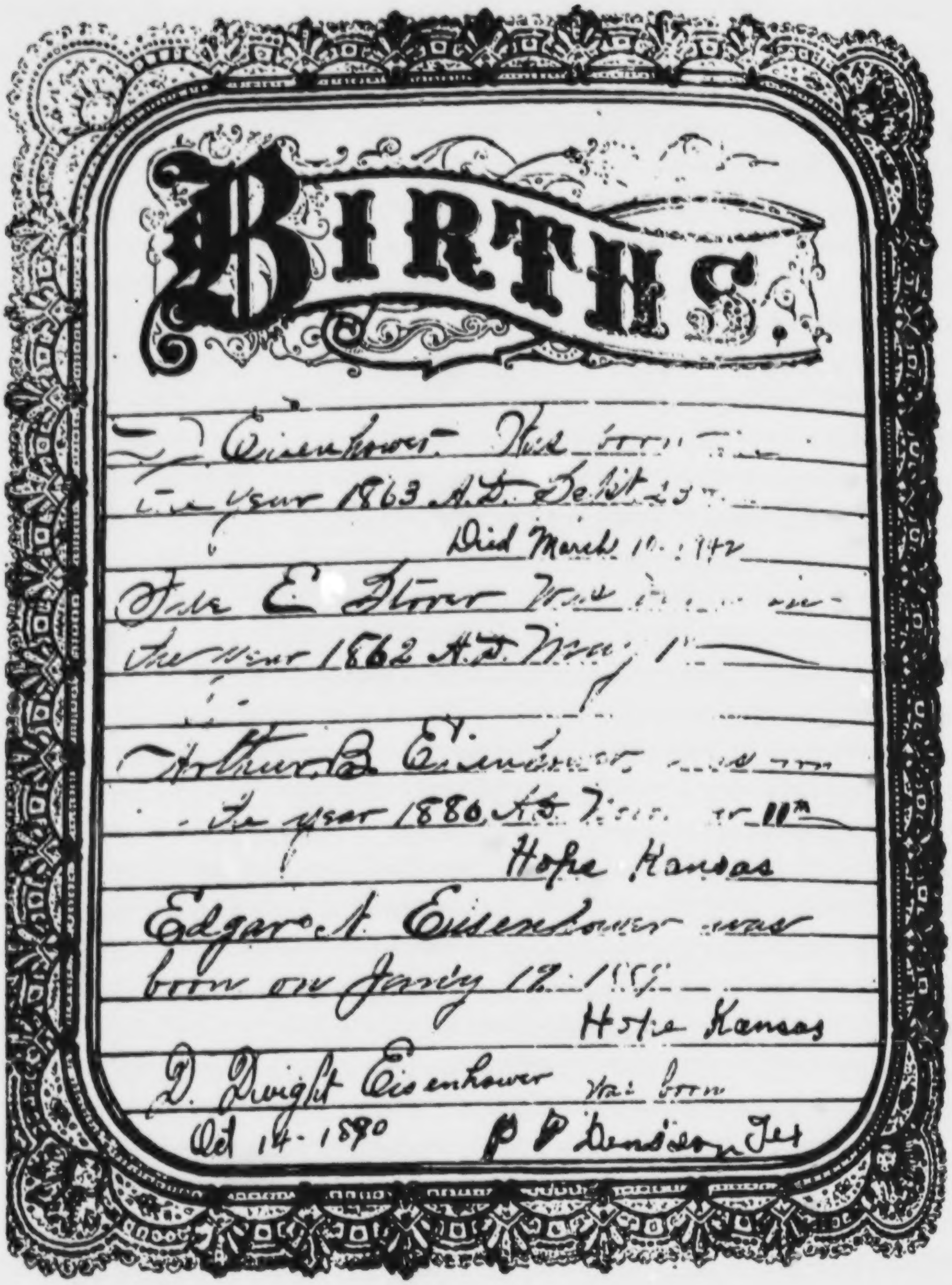
DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER'S BIRTH RECORD

The Family Bible



BIRTHS.

[illegible] Eisenhower Was born in
the year 1863 A.D. Sebt 23
Died March 10. 1942

Ida E Stover Was born in
the year 1862 A.D. May 1

Arthur B. Eisenhower was born
the year 1880 A.D. November 11th
Hope Kansas

Edgar N. Eisenhower was
born on Jan'y 19. 1889
Hope Kansas

D. Dwight Eisenhower was born
Oct 14-1890 D D Denison Tex

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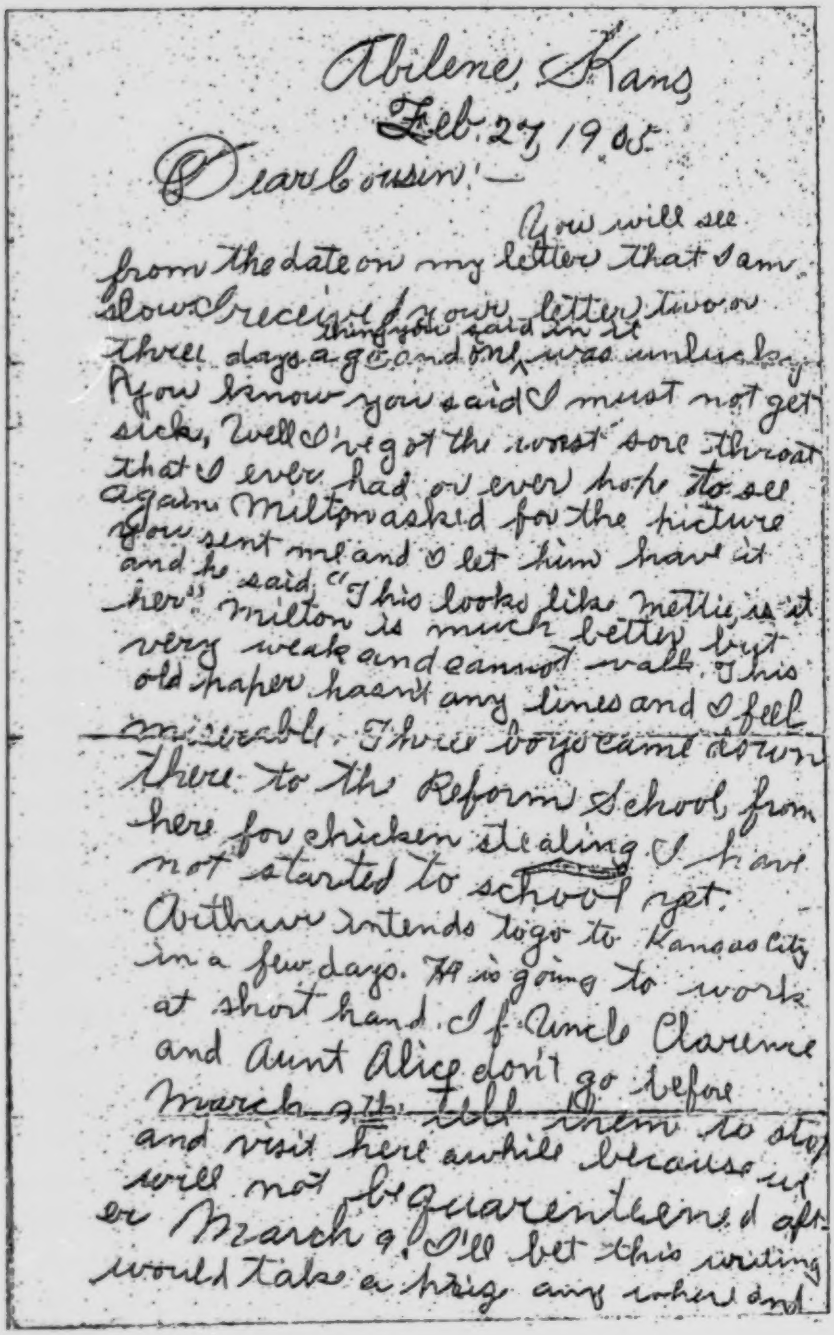
LETTER FROM DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER, 1905
To cousin Nettie Stover



Abilene, Kans
Feb. 27, 1905.

Dear Cousin:—

You will see from the date on my letter that I am slow. I received your letter two or three days ago and one thing you said in it was unlucky. You know you said I must not get sick, well I've got the worst sore throat that I ever had or ever hope to see again. Milton asked for the picture you sent me and I let him have it and he said "This looks like Nettie, is it her". Milton is much better but very weak and cannot walk. This old paper hasn't any lines and I feel miserable. Three boys came down there to the Reform School from here for chicken stealing. I have not started to school yet. Arthur intends to go to Kansas City in a few days. He is going to work at short hand. If Uncle Clarence and Aunt Alice don't go before March 7th. tell them to stop and visit here awhile because we will not be quarenteened aft March 9. I'll bet this writing would take a prize any where and

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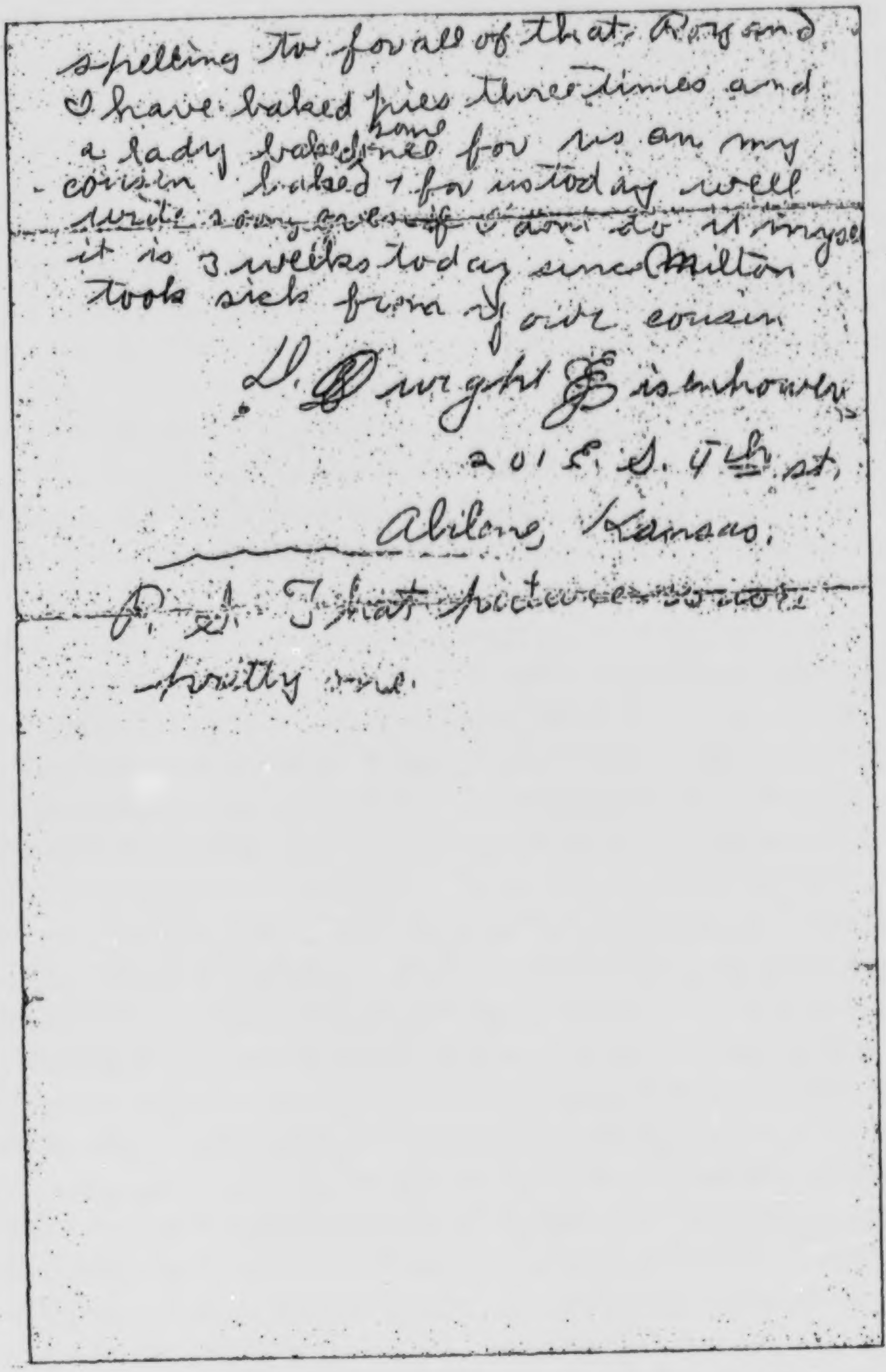
DDE's 1905 Letter, cont.



spelling to for all of that. Roy and
I have baked pies three times and
a lady baked some for us an my
cousin baked 1 for us today well
write soon excuse if I dont do it myself
it is 3 weeks today since Milton
took sick from your cousin

D. Dwight Eisenhower
201 S. E. 4th st.
Abilene, Kansas.

P. S. That picture is not
pritty me.

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NETTIE STOVER JACKSON ORAL HISTORY

Pages 36 -39:

BURG: Yes, the one [Eisenhower home] in Abilene, being preserved as it was.

JACKSON: Oh, yes. Yes, that west window in the, well, she had her piano in that room, but over in that west window she had a few flowers, but they had their reading material in that. And she had a, it seemed to me, a little rocker; I called it a sewing rocker, there by that west window. And then out this way from the house, northwest from the house, she had a bed of lilies. She didn't have a lot of other –

BURG: Are they calla lilies?

JACKSON: No, no, they're Madonna lilies. They get up so high, and they're very fragrant.

BURG: Wonder if those are still there, Don?

JACKSON: No, no, they're gone.

WILSON: Do you remember when you were there in 1904, the big barn? Was it still standing?

JACKSON: Yes, there was a barn there then. I'm sure there was because they had the horse there that had been --

WILSON: The veterinarian's.

JACKSON: Yes, Uncle Dave's brother.

WILSON: We've tried to track down when that was taken down, but you say that it was still there as late as 1904.

JACKSON: Oh, I know it was. I'm sure it was. I'm sure it was. Because they didn't build anything else. The barn was out there and the chicken house there, too.

WILSON: And then the garden was out directly east.

JACKSON: Yes, east.

BURG: Now when we talked with Milton in the home and he saw the piano, he laughed about it and said that he'd enjoyed playing it after dinner and couldn't understand for quite some time why his father would rise from his reading and come over and close the door. Then it occurred to him that, playing as loud as he was playing, he was disturbing his father's reading and study. Who was playing it when you were there? In that earlier period, was –

JACKSON: I don't remember of anyone playing it.

BURG: Ida presumably knew how to play it.

JACKSON: Oh, I think she knew but, oh, you get so busy with all the things that are involved, the things that have to be done. And possibly with us being there it made more of course.

BURG: Yes, that could be too. Mrs. Jackson says that for the life of her she cannot remember where she slept in that house, and it had to be crowded.

JACKSON: No, I can't remember when we were little; I haven't the least idea. Seems to me she said something about making pallets. Well, of course, on our old house when I was a youngster, my mother made pallets on the floor. When we had company, why you didn't think about being crowded. It was kind of fun to sleep on the floor. And our house was always Grand Central Station for both sides of the house because my dad loved company, and my mother loved to cook. So our house was where everybody came, both sides. Uncle Worth and Aunt Laura came from Virginia in 1912, and, oh, Dad wanted them to stay longer, but they weren't going to travel on Sunday, weren't going to ride the train on Sunday.

BURG: Mrs. Jackson, in that Eisenhower home with that many boys, life couldn't have been smooth all the time. Do you ever remember Ida discussing with you problems that she had or was she one more to keep it to herself?

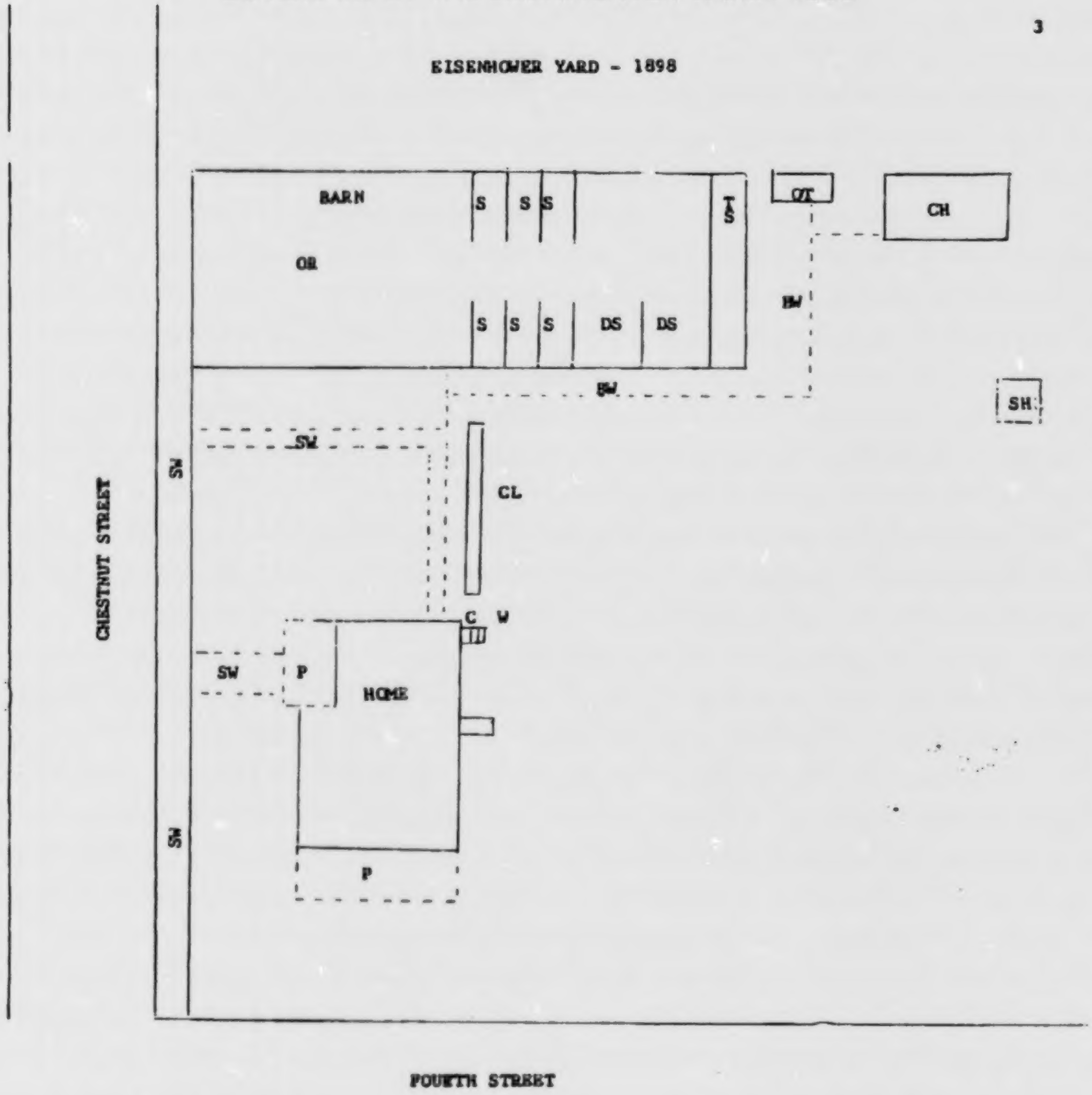
JACKSON: I think she ironed out the problems right as she went along. Whatever came up, right then she took care of it.

BURG: It didn't hang on?

JACKSON: No, I don't think it did. She was an unusual woman. Of course part of that could be prejudice because I loved her so much.

DIAGRAM OF THE EISENHOWER YARD. 1898

EISENHOWER YARD - 1898


BARN
OR
S
S
S
S
S
S
DS
DS
TS
OT
CH
BW
BW
SH
SW
SW
SW
CL
C
W
SW
P
HOME
SW
P
CHESTNUT STREET
FOURTH STREET

B- Barn
BW- Board walk
C- Cistern
CH- Chicken House
H- Home
CL- Clothes Line

OT- Outside Toilet
P- Porch
SH- Smoke House
SW- Sidewalk
W- Well

BARN
DS- Double Stall
OR- Operating Room
S- Single Stall
TS- Tool Shed

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CHURCH & RELIGION:
"Everybody I Knew Went to Church"

The schools were three in number; churches abounded. From memory alone I can identify seven and everybody I knew went to church. (The only exception were people we thought of as the toughs—poolroom sharks, we called them.) Social life was centered around the churches. Church picnics, usually held on the riverbank, were an opportunity to gorge on fried chicken, potato salad, and apple pie. The men pitched horseshoes, the women knitted and talked, the youngsters fished, and everyone recovered from the meal.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Sunday morning, in the small, Midwestern town of 1900, echoed with the pealing of church bells—a reminder to go to worship. Sunday was devoted to church. Services began in the morning with Sunday School, followed by the regular service, and ended with an evening service. All dressed in their Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes, and children were on their best behavior, even when the sermon was long and beyond their understanding. Hymns were a popular part of the service, and among the favorites were "Beulah Land," "Shall We Gather at the River," and "Sweet Bye and Bye." Wednesday night was reserved for the midweek prayer meeting and special church group meetings. "Family worship" was stressed, and it was not uncommon to see babies sleeping in the back pews during evening services.

Sunday School began with teachers presenting a lesson from the Scriptures. Older children took turns reading verses from the Bible, and younger children enjoyed Bible picture cards and religious scenes on the walls. The Sunday School secretary moved from class to class to collect the offering. At the conclusion of Sunday School, the day's attendance and the amount of the offering were announced. Adults attended their own Sunday School classes where they studied maps of the Holy Land and verses from the Bible.

The vast majority of small-town Midwesterners were white, middle-class, and Protestant. Their religious beliefs dictated the prevailing standards of community morality. Gambling, card playing, dancing, smoking, and drinking liquor were prohibited. Profanity, immodest dress, and immoral behavior aroused strong public condemnation. The lower class—termed "ne'er-do-wells"—generally ignored the rules of a society they didn't fit into, and the upper-middle class suffered no real consequences for breaking the code as long as it did not flaunt violations publicly. In word, at least, all "good" citizens condemned evil practices, and yet many towns had as many saloons as churches.

Newspapers printed articles that promoted proper conduct for boys and girls. Respectable young men were to practice personal cleanliness and get to bed early; avoid bad company, drinking, smoking, or chewing; attend church; and dress and act modestly. To do otherwise was to be a "fast young man." Girls were to conduct themselves with modesty, seriousness, and thoughtfulness in preparation for marriage and motherhood. Nonetheless, many girls loved their stylish clothes and showed off using the latest, risky expressions such as "I thought I should die!" and "Now you're real mean!" One small community was concerned about the "bicycle problem"—groups of young people riding bicycles to neighboring towns to visit on Sunday afternoons—a clear violation of the Sabbath.

Ministers enjoyed a position of dignity and respect in the community. Few had a formal education, and a minister's salary was low and undependable. There was little or no social life outside church activities. Ministers sometimes performed up to six Sunday services in addition to the midweek prayer meeting. They performed weddings, baptisms, and funerals and made calls to the bedsides of the sick and dying. Ministers were expected to preside over ice cream socials, W.C.T.U. (Women's Christian Temperance Union) meetings, and holidays such as July 4th celebrations and Decoration Day. Small fees were paid for funeral and wedding services, and some ministers substitute taught in the local schools.

In 1900, the churches were the center of social life for the community. Church was a proper place for boys to get to meet girls and walk them home after church. Church festivals presented entertainment programs to raise money; at Church fairs, women sold food and auctioned off donated items. Some churches even held lotteries, despite the anticipated complaints. Church picnics and ice cream socials were well-attended summer pastimes, and covered-dish or potluck dinners were held year round.

Summer time brought a wave of popular revival meetings. They were a much anticipated annual event for many parishioners. Visiting evangelists preached "fire-and-brimstone" sermons in tents set up on the outskirts of town. Members of the audience "testified" about their religious experiences and how they had been "saved." "Sinners" were encouraged to come forward to pray for their salvation.

By the 1920s and 30s, the central role of the churches in the community would undergo serious outside challenges. The moral code was weakening, and people were less inclined to follow the example of ministers and churches. Many blamed the aftermath of the Great War (World War I) for the decline in public morality. Whatever the reason, the churches now had competition for social activities, and, for good or bad, technological progress brought the rest of the world to the small Midwestern town.

Jacob and Rebecca Eisenhower and their children—including Dwight's father, David—came to Dickinson County, Kansas, from the Susquehanna Valley of Pennsylvania in 1879. They were members of a well-organized, prosperous, religious group called the Brethren in Christ. A sect of the Mennonites, they called themselves the "Plain People." In Dickinson County, they were more commonly known as the River Brethren. A devout, hard-working, self-sufficient group, they preferred to live in a close-knit community. They were respected throughout the county for their many fine qualities, but their distinctive clothing set them apart.

The men dressed in black and wore black felt hats. They grew heavy beards and wore their hair long and combed straight back. Women wore long black dresses, avoiding decoration of any kind. On their heads, women wore a covering called a "prayer veiling," and, when outside the home, they put on a large black bonnet with a long, gathered skirting along the bottom.

Growing up, Dwight and his brothers attended Sunday School at the Church of the Brethren in Christ in Abilene. Grandfather Jacob and two of David's brothers, Ira and Abe, were ministers. Ida had memorized countless Bible verses as a girl and used them to reinforce her lessons to her sons. Each meal began with a Bible lesson. In the evening after supper, the family gathered in the parlor for Bible reading. The boys took turns reading, reluctantly handing the Bible over to the next brother whenever a mistake was made. The River Brethren were stricter in the actual practice of their religious beliefs than some of the church-going citizens of Abilene; however, their beliefs were not inconsistent with those of the larger community at that time.

Although Dwight D. Eisenhower never joined the church of his youth, its influence was evident in his behavior and beliefs throughout his life.

Suggested Readings from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*: 51-53, 60-63, 79, 86-88.

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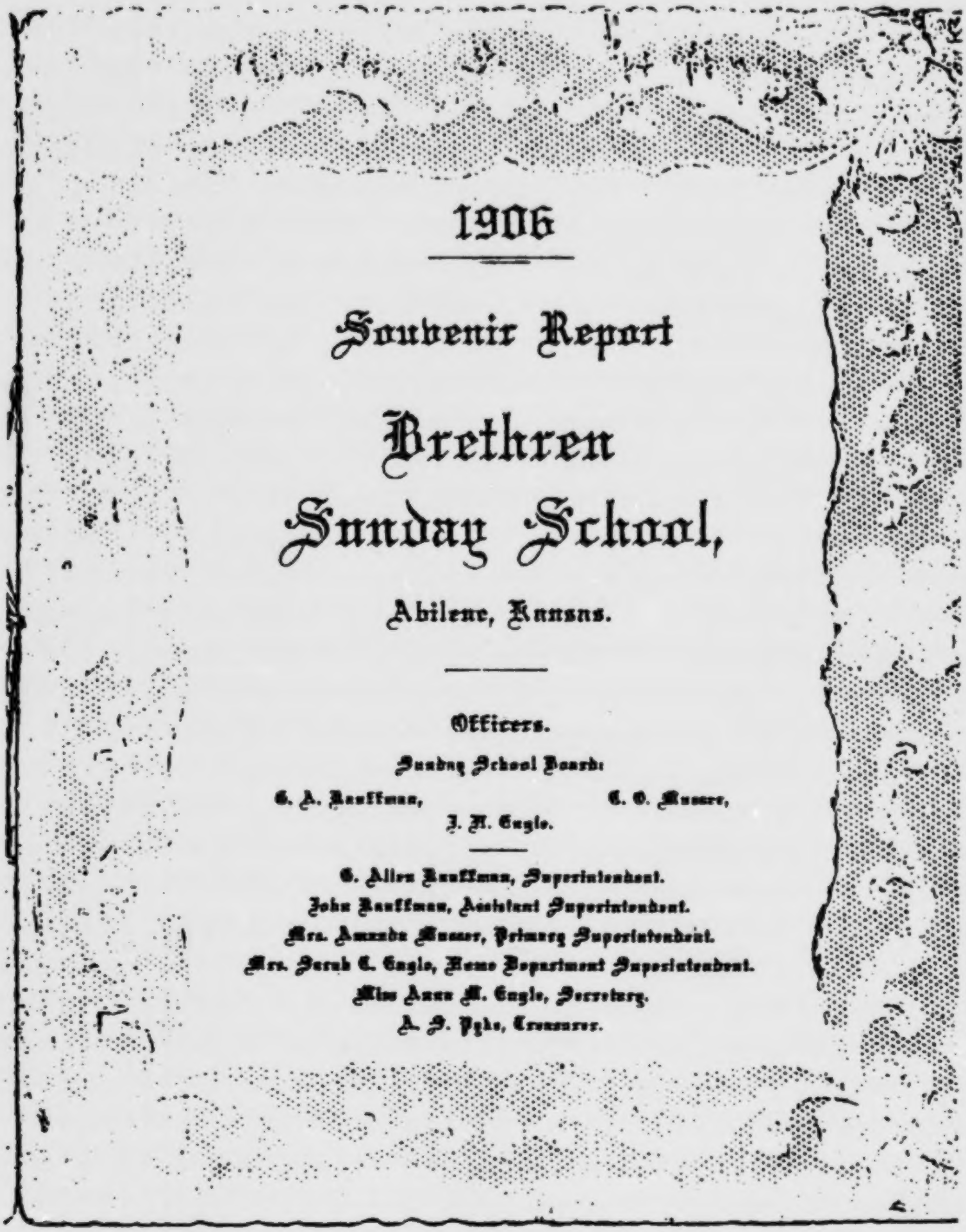
1906 SOUVENIR REPORT, BRETHREN SUNDAY SCHOOL



1906

Souvenir Report

Brethren
Sunday School,

Abilene, Kansas.

Officers.

Sunday School Board:

G. A. Kauffman, C. O. Musser,
J. N. Engle.

G. Allen Kauffman, Superintendent.
John Kauffman, Assistant Superintendent.
Mrs. Amanda Musser, Primary Superintendent.
Mrs. Sarah E. Engle, Home Department Superintendent.
Miss Anna M. Engle, Secretary.
A. S. Pyke, Treasurer.

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Showing Forth His Praise. *Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Eph. 5:19.*

Our faces ought to reflect back the sunshine of heaven, and the joyful tones of our voices to seem the echoes of its hallelujahs.—F. P. Cobbe.

INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT.

Class Number 5.

*Mrs. M. L. Hoffman, Teacher,
Florence Amess,
*Florence Engle,
Rhoda Hoffman,
*Hedwig Schmutz,
Anna Engle,
Cora Engle,
*Katie Gish,
Carrie Leady,
Anna Lenhert,
Jessie Williams,
Winnie Williams, ... 12
Dwight Eisenhower,
Lillie Ross,
John Dayhoff,
Mary Dayhoff,
Irvin Metz, ... 17

**Members International Bible Reading Association.*

To live content with small means; to seek elegance rather than luxury, and refinement rather than fashion; to be worthy, not respectable; wealthy, not rich; to study hard, think quietly, talk gently, act frankly; to listen to stars and birds, to babes and sages, with open heart; to bear all cheerfully, bear all bravely; await occasions, hurry never. In a word, to let the spiritual, unbidden and unconscious, grow up through the common. This is to be my symphony.—Channing.

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LETTER FROM JOHN LONG
Childhood Friend

Rt 2 Box 440
Hood River Ore
97031
March 6 1970

Dear Mr Endacott

I hear from Dr Ed Long that you would like to have more information about my life with General Eisenhower when I was going to school in the 5-6-7 and 8th grades at Abilene Kansas.

My mother and Dwights mother were very close friends as the Grandfather of Dwights came from the same valley in Pensylvania that my grandfather lived.

My grandfather home was only about 6 or 7 miles from Elizabethville where the Eisenhower family came from. And as a boy my Grandparents took me up to Elizabeth Ville many times to the camp meetings held there by the United Brethern Church. My mother was the first

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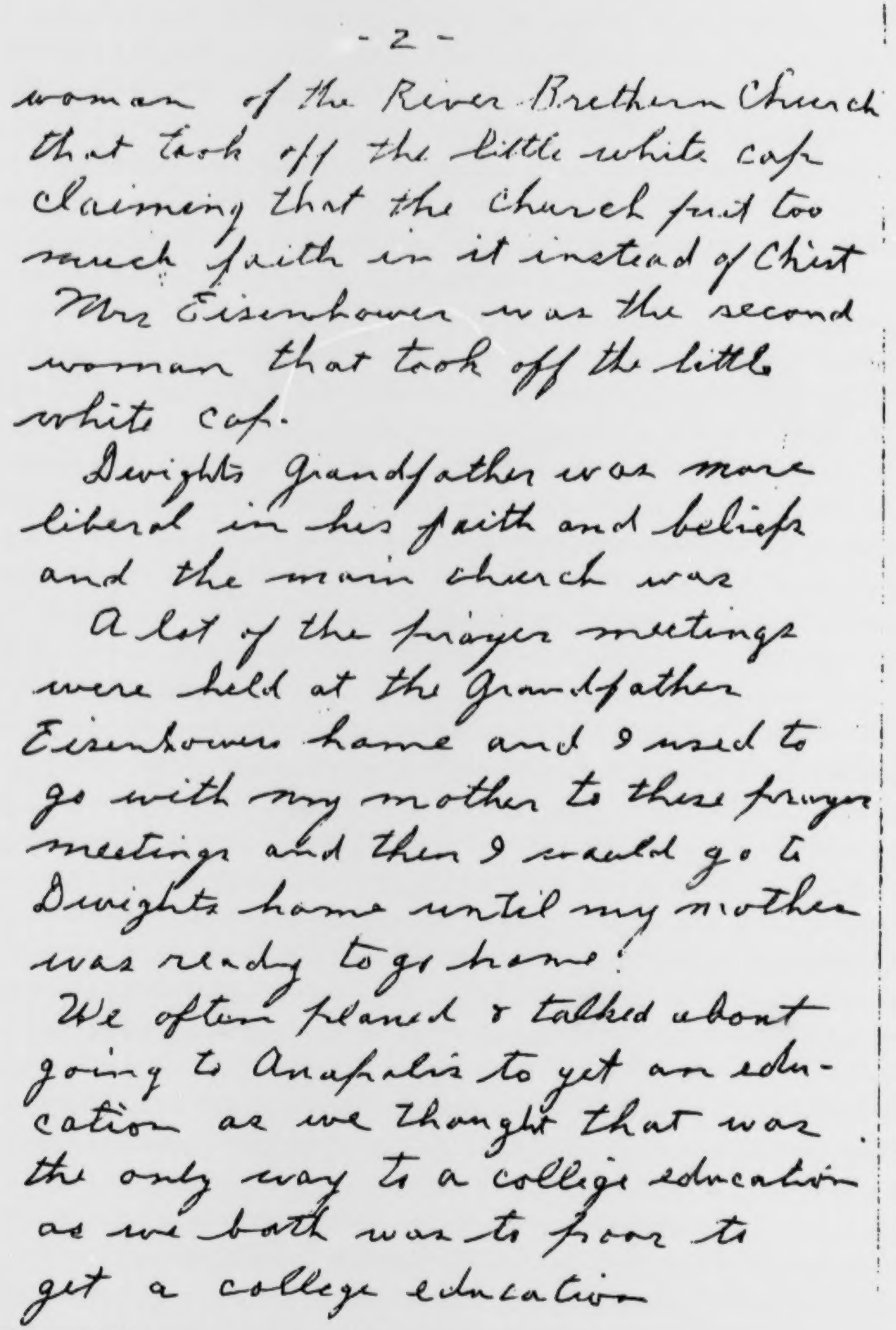

- 2 -

woman of the River Brethern Church that took off the little white cap claiming that the church put too much faith in it instead of Chist

Mrs Eisenhower was the second woman that took off the little white cap.

Dwights grandfather was more liberal in his faith and beliefs and the main church was

A lot of the prayer meetings were held at the Grandfather Eisenhowers home and I used to go with my mother to these prayer meetings and then I would go to Dwights home until my mother was ready to go home!

We often planed & talked about going to Anapolis to get an education as we thought that was the only way to a college education as we both was to poor to get a college education

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REVEREND RAY I. WITTER ORAL HISTORY

Pages 1-3:

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, will you, please, identify yourself and tell us in what manner you are related to General Eisenhower?

REV. WITTER: My mother and his father were brother and sister.

MR. BARBASH: Rev. Witter, can you, please, tell us what were Wadesian and Piestic movements in Europe and what influence they had on the founding of the Brethren in Christ Church?

REV.WITTER: I would say that the influence being handed down was the greater influence from what I have been informed. Some of their methods and ways of worship and doctrine of beliefs and so on had its bearing and influence upon some of the early men that established or were instrumental in starting the Church.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, would you, please, tell us how the Brethren in Christ Church was founded in the United States?

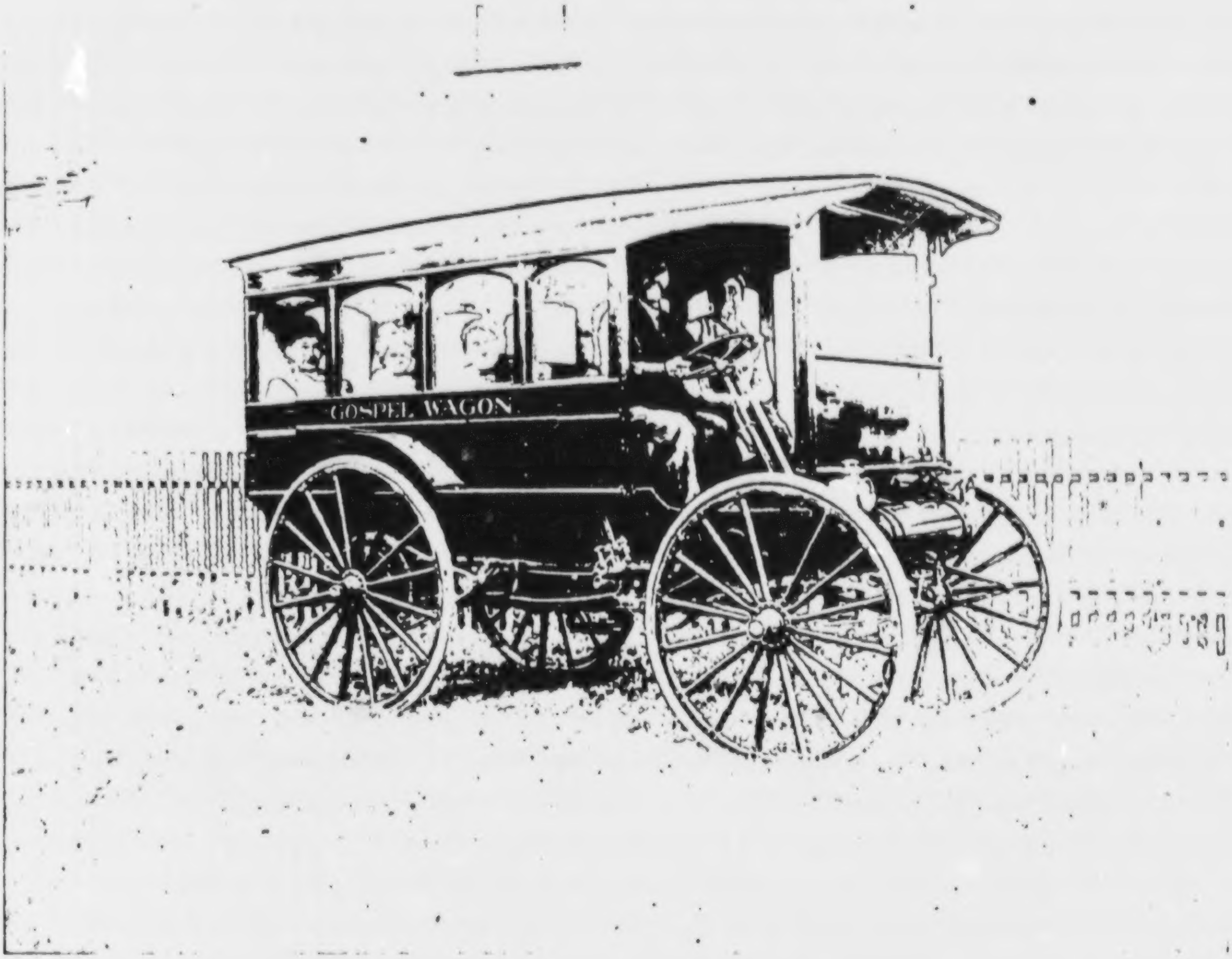
REV.WITTER: Yes, it was founded along the Susquehanna River there in Pennsylvania and started with two brothers. They were the first ones that, just about the same time that the United Brethren started, so as time went on in some of their beliefs which were separate than any that they could feel at home in any other churches. Speaking of these United Brethren who started theirs said "why don't you do like we did" and so they agreed they would, so these brothers baptized each other and never would tell which was the first member of the Church. But from, then on, as they continued in their services the additions were added to the Church and it grew.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, what were the names of the brothers and what was the basic belief regarding baptism of the Church at this time?

REV.WITTER: Well, these two Engle brothers were the first—the instigators of the Church and the records state this very clearly, but they held their first meetings in the houses and, then, the matter of baptism, they baptized by immersion—trine immersion, which means three times forward in the name of the Trinity. While we don't teach that baptism washes away sins or has any conversion to it, but we believe it is for believers and for those who have received Christ. Their having baptized in the river is where the nickname came—they were called River Brethren at first because of two things—some traditions say it was because they baptized in the river that was a convenient place, where the Church started is right along the river and other traditions is that it was because they loved along the river and as the Church grew, some of those brethren at a distance, it was not common for then to say "let's go down by the river and see how our brethren are getting along", hence, the name River Brethren got started as a nick name, only.

THE GOSPEL WAGON, 1911

Photograph # 64-182



Reverend Abraham Lincoln and Anna Eisenhower

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SCHOOL & EDUCATION:

"Education in the Small-Town View"

In the fall of 1896, I entered the Lincoln school, little aware that I was starting on a road in formal education which would not terminate until 1929 when I finished courses at the Army's War College in Washington, D.C. What I learned at the start would not remain static. In the third of a century between my first and last school was compressed a series of revolutions—political and economic, social and scientific—which were to transform the human environment of the entire globe.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Going to school in a small Midwestern town 100 years ago was, in some respects, very different from today; in others, little has changed. The goal of public education was not to prepare young people for a career, as it is today. Rather, students labored to perfect their Spencerian penmanship and struggled to master the basics of spelling, reading, and "ciphering" (arithmetic)—what we term the "three R's" today. Most members of the community agreed that common sense and hard work rounded out a "good" common-school education.

Religious education was well integrated into the public school curriculum. The school day generally began with the teacher's reading a Bible verse to the class. *McGuffey's Readers*, a popular textbook series of the time, were filled with stories and poems that taught religious and moral lessons. Another common theme was "civic virtue," what we call good citizenship today. It was considered the parents' duty to insure a "proper" education for their children, and, in turn, obedience and devotion to parents were important values that were emphasized in school. Classes began at 9:00 in the morning; however, before-school chores began much earlier than that—before daylight. Deane Malott, an Abilene boy born to a prosperous "north side" family in 1898, recalls cleaning the "clinkers" from the furnace; building a fire in the kitchen stove; feeding and currying the horses; feeding the chickens and gathering eggs; cleaning the barn and the hen house; feeding the dog; hitching up the horse; and practicing the piano—all before leaving for school in the morning! The first bell of the day rang at 8:30. A second bell, at 9:00, prompted students to line up in front of the school doors and march silently, single file, to their classes.

Classrooms were often dark and dreary places that buzzed with the steady hum of student recitations. The competitive spirit of a spelling bee helped to break the monotony of lessons, and a discipline problem for the teacher became lively entertainment for the class. Because school kitchens did not exist yet, students walked home for lunch and returned for the afternoon session. At that time it wasn't considered proper for boys and girls to play on the same playground at recess.

In general, Kansans of 1900 were a literate population; however, relatively few completed a four-year high school education. In the early years of the twentieth century, an eighth-grade education was considered adequate, and it was certainly no disgrace to leave school after the fifth or sixth grade. High school was largely a female domain. Girls enrolled in the "normal" training program to prepare them to teach in the county's one-room schools. For boys, it was far more practical to get a job and begin to earn a living. Farm boys rarely attended high school because their labor was needed at home. Boys who expected to become professionals, such as lawyers or doctors, finished high school and went on to college. For the majority of young people, however, high school was, quite simply, an impractical luxury.

A typical daily schedule of classes in 1900 included Latin or German, English, algebra, and geography. The teachers, and occasionally the school superintendent, took turns leading Bible devotions in a classroom called the "chapel." From time to time, the superintendent visited classrooms as a highly visible deterrent to bad behavior.

High school students of this era participated in many of the same activities as high school students today. They wrote and acted in plays and musicals; worked on the yearbook; played an instrument; belonged to a variety of clubs; enrolled in debate; and competed in sports like baseball and football. Basketball was a new sport that was popular with the girls. Neither the school nor citizens took much interest in school athletics. Students who wanted to play a sport bought their own uniforms and personal equipment. Money for other sport-related expenses was raised through small membership dues and gate receipts.

Teaching wasn't considered a real profession nor did teachers make much money. A college education and professional training were not requirements for common-school teaching, although high school teachers generally had a college degree. In addition to a basic proficiency in the three R's, a teacher was expected to ". . . whip the bullies into submission . . . and hold his own against the district's champion in ciphering and spelling matches."[1] Teachers were expected to be upstanding role models in their communities—demonstrated by regular church attendance and a strict avoidance of card playing, dancing, or using profanity. Not surprisingly, in many communities, the turnover rate for teachers was very high.

Dwight Eisenhower was an intelligent boy who sometimes found school to be dull. He didn't take school as seriously as he should have, but he managed to earn respectable grades without trying very hard. In the Eisenhower home, getting a good education was a family priority. All six boys, from an early age, were encouraged to go on to college which was highly unusual for the time. The Eisenhower boys knew that their parents wouldn't be able to afford to send them to college, and they began to plan accordingly.

At Lincoln Elementary School, Dwight's favorite subject was spelling, followed closely by arithmetic. His worst subject was penmanship, and throughout his life he was famous for his indecipherable scrawl. During high school, he excelled at plane geometry, so much so that his teacher allowed him to develop his own propositions and solve the problems in his own way. Dwight's real passion was reserved for reading history, especially ancient history and biographies of famous military men. As a boy, he needed no encouragement to read. In fact, his mother Ida finally resorted to locking his history books in a cabinet—which he unlocked at his pleasure once he found the key—because he neglected his chores.

Dwight loved sports and excelled at them, especially football and baseball. When he was a freshman, he fell and scraped his knee. The small wound quickly developed into a medical crisis that threatened his life. Dr. Tracy Conklin declared that the leg would have to be amputated, but Dwight refused. He would rather have died than be unable to play his sports. Miraculously, he recovered and repeated his freshman year because he had missed so much school. He graduated in 1909 from AHS.

Dwight's burning ambition for a college education led him, eventually, to apply for and receive an appointment to West Point. With it, the direction of his life was changed forever.

Recommended Reading from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*: 36-37, 39-43, 68, 77-82, 93-102.

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[1] Lewis Atherton, *Main Street on the Middle Border* (Bloomington, IN: University Press, 1954), p. 25.

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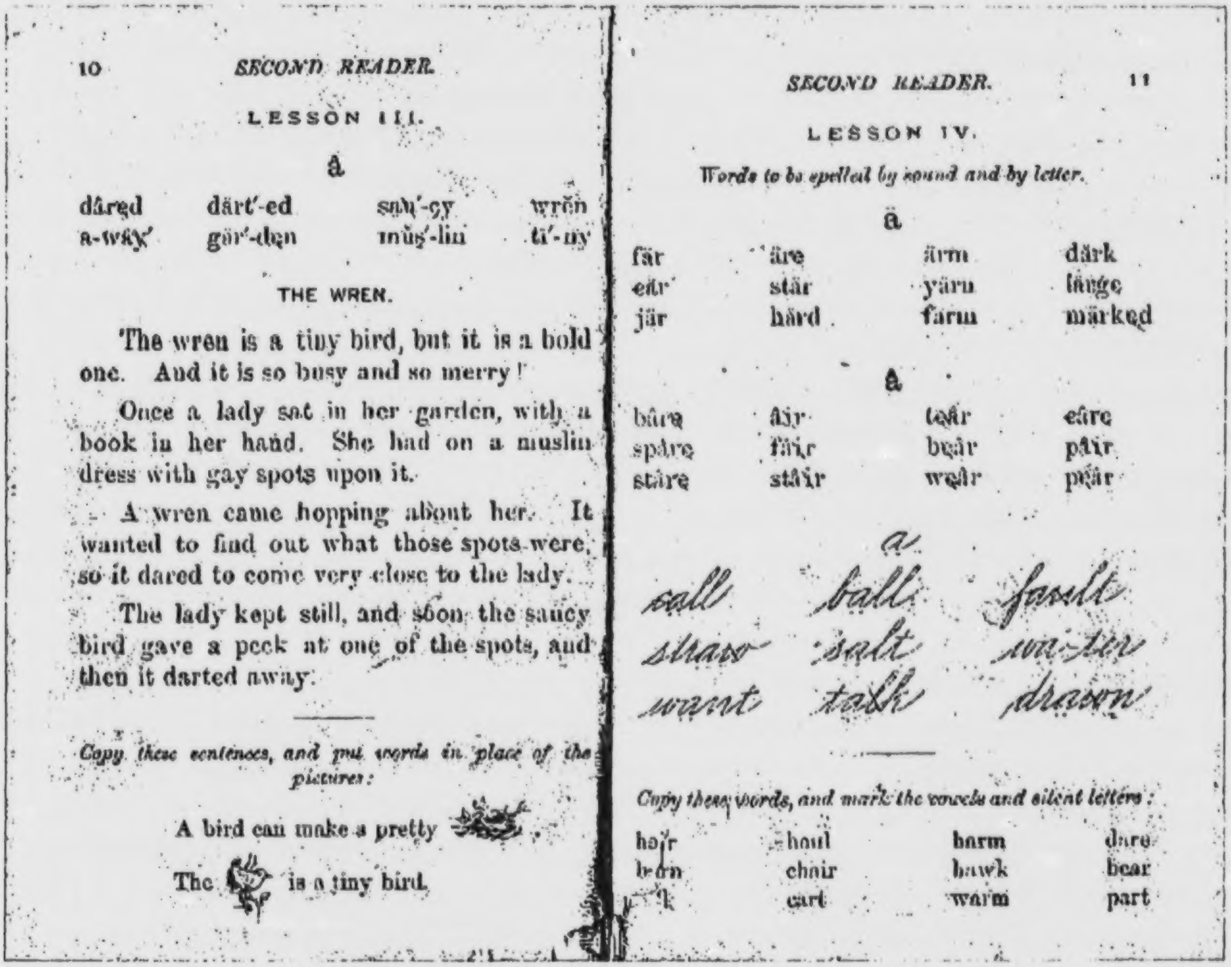
LELIA GRACE PICKING ORAL HISTORY, 1965

MISS PICKING: The city building stood at the site of the present Municipal building at the corner of 5th and Broadway Streets in the town of Abilene, which in later years was to become famous as the home of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Dwight's class was large in numbers but not great in morale, as we knew we would be dubbed "greenies" by the upper classmen. The accommodations the building afforded were not the best but we managed. There was a large room on the east on the second floor used as a recitation room and study hall combined. In it we met for Chapel. On the southwest was a recitation room and another on the northwest. In this room from a cupola housing the fire bell the boys of A.H.S., Dwight among them, responded immediately by skipping classes to help man the old two wheeled hose cart—a far cry from our present truck with its snorkel. If Dwight didn't get to the hose cart he was among those who sprinted to the store to buy treats for the girls. On the first floor one room was used by History classes. Here Miss Pauline Sleeth taught Dwight. The city Marshall's family occupied the east half of the first floor. In the basement were the jail cells. One morning on arriving at school we found a prisoner had tried to dynamite his way out, the damage was not great enough to warrant a holiday. Dr. F.S. Blayney who often substituted as a teacher remarked that we received our education midst the howling of the dogs, the wailing of the prisoners and the odor of the onions being cooked for the Marshall's dinner. Dwight was a boy who worked and had a little time for parties and social gatherings, at least, during the Freshman and Sophomore years. He spent two years in the old city hall and two years in the new high school, erected in 1907. This building, facing the south on 7th street at the end of Spruce has since been torn down. In Junior and Senior years, Dwight took a lively interest in athletics. The Yearbook of 1909, the *Helianthus*, gives the statement "D. Eisenhower sticks around the left and center gardens. He works to keep the team together and in good spirits." This characteristic as a youth followed into his military career. He was an individual of action. He was ever mindful of the welfare of his soldiers. His D-Day was the outgrowth of his early idea of cooperation. Another statement in the yearbook says "Dwight is our best historian and mathematician. His interests in History is one of his outstanding traits as a scholar." Mrs. C.D. Wetzel, a classmate, who was Winifred Williams, makes this remark: "I remember that whenever the teachers called on Dwight he could always recite. I never heard him say 'I don't know'." My most vivid memory is of his reciting in Miss Dickinson's English Class.

THE SECOND READER

Appleton's School Readers, © 1886



10 SECOND READER.

LESSON III.

ā

dâred därt'-ed sau'-cy wrĕn
a-wāy' gär'-den mus'-lin tī'-ny

THE WREN.

The wren is a tiny bird, but it is a bold one. And it is so busy and so merry!

Once a lady sat in her garden, with a book in her hand. She had on a muslin dress with gay spots upon it.

A wren came hopping about her. It wanted to find out what those spots were, so it dared to come very close to the lady.

The lady kept still, and soon the saucy bird gave a peck at one of the spots, and then it darted away.

Copy these sentences, and put words in place of the pictures:

A bird can make a pretty .

The is a tiny bird.

SECOND READER. 11

LESSON IV.

Words to be spelled by sound and by letter.

ä

fär äre ärm därk
cär stär yärn lärge
jär härd färm märked

â

bâre âir tear câre
spâre fâir bear pâir
stâre stâir wear pear

a

call ball fault
straw salt wa-ter
want talk drawn

Copy these words, and mark the vowels and silent letters:

hair haul harm dare
barn chair hawk bear
[illegible] cart warm part

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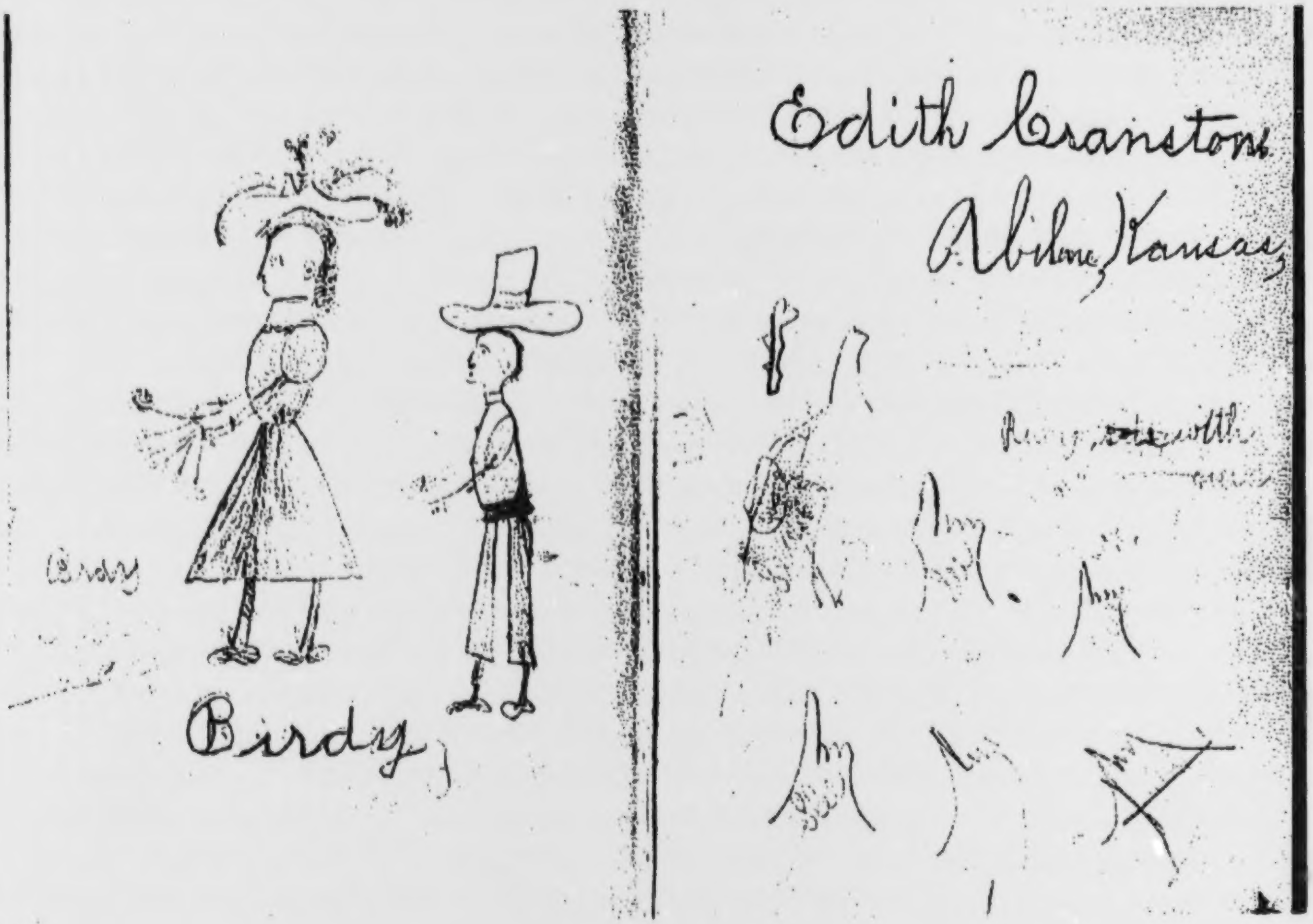
THE THIRD READER
Appletons' School Readers, © 1877


Birdy
Birdy
Edith Cranston
Abilene, Kansas

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"ATHLETICS" BY DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

1909 AHS Yearbook, *Helianthus*

Athletics

By Dwight Eisenhower

EARLY in the fall of 1908, the High School boys organized an Athletic Association for the year. After electing Dwight Eisenhower president, Harry Makins vice-president and Herbert Sommers secretary and treasurer, we proceeded to do business.

Deciding not to play any base ball in the fall, we started on football at once. Bruce Hurd was elected captain, and soon a large number of candidates for the squad were out working. After two weeks of hard work, Captain Hurd decided on the following team:

Left end	Huffman
Left tackle	Ingersoll
Left guard	Pattin
Center	Funk
Right guard	Weekle
Right tackle	Hurd
Right end	D. Eisenhower
Quarter	Merrifield
Left half	Makins
Right half	Sommers
Full back	E. Eisenhower

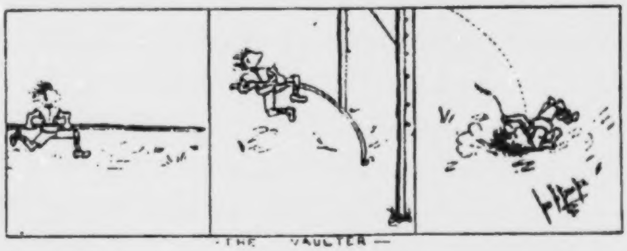
We were deprived of our coach, but nevertheless, turned out a very creditable team. Unfortunately, however, only four games were played during the season, not giving the team a chance to prove its ability. But for the games that were played, the students supported the team loyally, and time and again the boys surmounted great difficulties, cheered on by the fierce enthusiasm displayed by our rooters.

After the football season closed, we had to spend the winter dreaming of past victories and future glories, for A. H. S. boasts of no indoor gymnasium, and basket ball was never played here. But we improved the condition of the Association itself, by drawing up a constitution, which makes the organization a permanent one, and each year it will be simply a question of electing new officers.

Thanking the citizens of the town who have taken such an interest in the High School Athletics, and also our fellow classmates for their loyalty to us, we are yours for future victories on the gridiron by teams of dear old A. H. S.

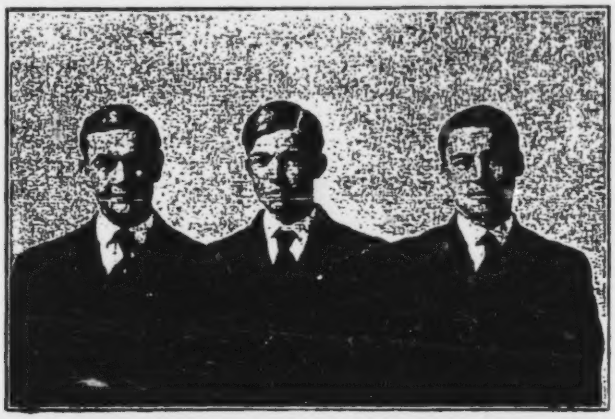
FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Abilene vs. Junction City at Junction City.
Abilene vs. Junction City at Abilene.
Abilene vs. Chapman at Abilene.
Abilene vs. Agricultural College at Abilene.



— THE VAULTER —

OFFICERS:
ABILENE HIGH
SCHOOL ATHLETIC
ASSOCIATION



OFFICERS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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WORK & PLAY:

"To Get Our Hands On Every Cent We Could Possibly Earn"

In the furnace room there were three large fire-tube boilers. We used slack (almost powdered) coal, and clinkers formed. With a slice bar, twelve feet or so in length, I would push the burning coal to one side, loosen the clinkers from the grates, then haul them out with a hoelike tool while another man turned a stream of water on the clinker. In this small inferno, life lost its charm but the job led to another promotion.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Children and young people in the early years of the twentieth century worked and played much the same as they do today. Early in life, children learned the value of work firsthand. "These were the days when children had real chores to do and did them as a matter of course."[1] Parents taught them how to cook, wash and dry dishes, and clean. They helped to wash, hang, and iron laundry as soon as they were old enough to be taught.

Out-of-doors, children were responsible for the care of pets and livestock. Stalls and pens were cleaned, the garden was hoed and weeded, and the cow milked twice a day. Local farmers or small business owners hired older boys to work in the summer. Many jobs required long hours of physical toil for very modest pay.

During the school year, some students had after-school jobs in downtown businesses or local industries. Many had summer jobs that required hard physical labor. When they were in their early teens, some girls worked as "hired girls," doing household chores for another family in exchange for room, board, and a small wage.

Life for children in 1900 wasn't all work. After chores and schoolwork were finished, children enjoyed playing and having fun. Most little girls had a rag doll and perhaps a "penny" doll, a miniature china doll. "Nickel" dolls were larger and nicer. One popular brand of oatmeal contained a pattern for a cloth doll that mothers sewed and stuffed for their daughters. Every little girl dreamed of receiving a life-sized doll with a porcelain head, real hair and lashes, and moveable eyes. Little boys preferred a cloth bag of prized marbles which they carried around in their pockets. On the first warm day of spring, they gathered outside, testing their skill and luck with their friends. Older boys were allowed to carry jackknives and competed at a game called "Mumblety-peg" in which they took turns flipping the knife blades into the ground.

Outside games were as popular as they are today. Children organized themselves to play "hide-and-seek," "ring-around-a-rosy," "drop-the-handkerchief," and "follow-the-leader." Baseball was not considered a proper game for girls; however, it was a favorite sport for boys, along with football, boxing, wrestling, and foot races. The hayloft in the barn out back was the perfect place to practice gymnastics and put on amateur shows and circuses.

This was a time when children freely explored the countryside. In summer, the local creek became the community swimming hole and, in winter, an ice-skating rink. Homemade kites flew in the summer sky, and many Sunday-afternoon, horse-and-buggy rides ended with a river-side picnic. The river was a perfect setting for fishing, boating, and camping. Hikes and hayrides were other typical outdoor activities in pleasant weather. When there was enough snow in the winter, children hitched their sleds behind a wagon or horse and thrilled to a slippery ride down country roads.

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[1] Deane Malott, *Growing Up In Abilene, Kansas: 1898—1916* (Abilene, KS: Dickinson County Historical Society, 1992), p. 14.

As early as 1890, every town had at least one drugstore with a soda fountain or ice cream parlor. Young people met their friends "downtown" for sodas, sundaes, and malted milks, already American favorites. Another popular activity for young people was to go to one another's homes in the evenings. All gathered around the piano or organ in the parlor for a sing-along to the musical hits of the day. "Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight," "Whippoorwill Song," and "Over the Garden Wall" were among the most requested.

Every town had at least one band; most had several. By far, this was the most popular of all local music entertainment. Dazzling uniforms, the flash of silver instruments, and snappy high-stepping young men were a reflection of the town's own spirit and pride. Girls who wanted to play had to organize their own bands.

Every "progressive" town boasted an Opera House where traveling troupes performed plays, musicals, and light opera. By the early 1900s, opera houses were being converted to movie theaters at a rapid pace. It was the age of the three-reel, silent picture. Regular admission was 15 to 40 cents, but most fans waited for the Saturday ten-cent matinee to view popular films such as *Trip to the Moon* and *The Great Train Robbery*.

County fairs and carnivals featured exhibits, horse races, pulling contests, hot-air balloon rides, and games of chance. The occasional medicine show that pulled into town was a magnet for a curious, and sometimes gullible, crowd. Summer Chautauqua shows entertained the community with a week of lectures, speeches, and musical performances. Nothing, however, compared with the glamour of the circus. For Midwesterners, who had limited contact with the outside world, exotic animals, death-defying acts, and chariots made the day the circus came to town a major event in small town life.

When Dwight Eisenhower was growing up in Abilene, Kansas, the greater part of the ordinary person's day was spent working. Life was no different for the Eisenhowers. As soon as her sons were able to help, Ida devised a weekly schedule of rotating chores. That way, each boy learned every job in the busy household. Because there were no Eisenhower daughters, even what were traditionally "girls" chores such as cooking and sewing were mastered by the six sons. After school and in the summers, Dwight and his brothers worked at a variety of jobs including farm and factory work. With his earnings he bought treats and athletic equipment and took dates to the "picture show" at the Seeyle Theater.

After high school graduation, Dwight began working fulltime at the Belle Springs Creamery. He and his brother Edgar devised a plan to put each other through college. Dwight would remain in Abilene to work and pay for his brother's education. After a couple of years, Ed would drop out to work for a time so Dwight could attend college. Dwight's appointment to West Point changed all that.

Like young people today, Dwight enjoyed himself when he had the time. He thrilled at pistol-shooting contests down at Mud Creek by men who actually knew Wild Bill Hickok. Now and then, they allowed him to practice. Baseball and football were his passion, and he enjoyed boxing and working out in a make-shift gym at the back of a print shop downtown. He and his friends swam and skated at nearby Mud Creek. With Bob Davis, as guide and teacher, Dwight fished, flat-boat paddled, camped, and learned how to win at poker on the Smoky Hill River. W.C. Parker's Amusement Company was only a few blocks from his home, but the people and activity of downtown Abilene were often entertainment enough for a small-town boy growing up at the turn of the century.

Recommended Reading from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*: 73-75, 68-71, 83-86, 88-92, 94-95, 97-98, 102-104.

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SWEDE HAZLETT LETTER, 1970

Childhood Friend

I am pleased that you are undertaking this story of Ike - and will proceed to unburden myself of more material than you contracted for. After all these years I may be a bit hazy as to details, but I'll do the best I can. Where Ike is concerned I think my memory is pretty good, for, ever since I've known him intimately, I've admired him tremendously and have always known he was headed for the top - none of his many honors has surprised me in the least. This stuff about a prophet being without honor in his own home town is the bunk!

Ike was somewhat more than a year older than I, and lived in a different part of town, so went to a different grammar school. Accordingly, although I knew him and liked him, I never knew him intimately until we landed in the same high school. Here he was not only an excellent student but, what was more important in my eyes, the star halfback of the football team - what would be known as the "triple-threat" nowadays. But I liked him most for his sterling qualities - he was calm, frank, laconic and sensible, and not in the least affected by being the school hero.

I spent only one year in high school, then went away for 3 years at a military school in Wisconsin. Living near a cavalry post (Fort Riley) and having been brought up astride a pony, I early set my goal as West Point and had corresponded with my Congressman since I was 12, seeking an appointment that never materialized. My father, I believe, felt that military school might cure my ambition. It didn't. In the late spring of 1910 my Congressman offered me an appointment to Annapolis and I, with some misgivings about the sea, accepted it. I left school and arrived in Annapolis in early May to prep at a cram school for the June exams. But the time was too short - I failed in mathematics. My Congressman, probably because no one else from Kansas was interested in the Navy in those days, kindly reappointed me. For I had seen just enough of Annapolis to be tremendously enthusiastic about it, and to know that there was nothing I wanted quite as much as to be a naval officer. (Incidentally, in spite of a tough break in health that keeps me out of the fighting, I still feel the same way about it.) All thoughts of West Point were gone.

I went back to Abilene and got a job managing the office of a very small manufacturing concern - studying for next year whenever the demands of the job permitted. Ike had graduated from high school in 1909 and, because of lack of funds, had taken a job in the local Belle Springs Creamery. This was a fairly large concern, employing probably 40 people and serving most of east-central Kansas. Eventually Ike expected to go to Kansas University (I have no idea what he intended to take up) but he felt it necessary to build up a nest egg first. He did very well in the creamery and in the summer of 1910 was made the night foreman, having entire charge from 6 pm to 6 am. True, he had only a couple of men under him, to keep the boilers and refrigerating plant running and to guard the plant, but it was considered a quite responsible job for a youngster only 19 years old.

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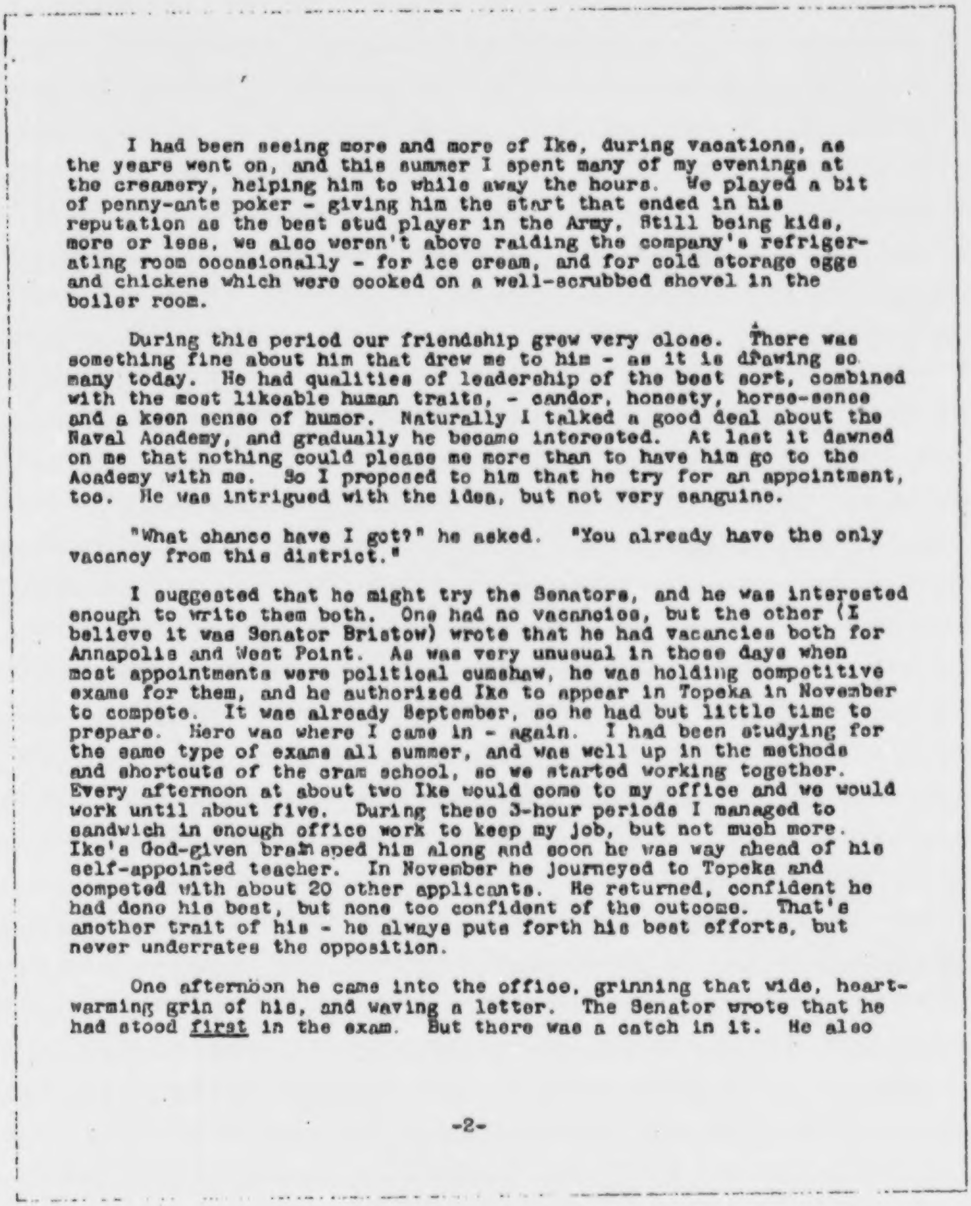
Swede Hazlett's Letter, cont.



I had been seeing more and more of Ike, during vacations, as the years went on, and this summer I spent many of my evenings at the creamery, helping him to while away the hours. We played a bit of penny-ante poker - giving him the start that ended in his reputation as the best stud player in the Army. Still being kids, more or less, we also weren't above raiding the company's refrigerating room occasionally - for ice cream, and for cold storage eggs and chickens which were cooked on a well-scrubbed shovel in the boiler room.

During this period our friendship grew very close. There was something fine about him that drew me to him - as it is drawing so many today. He had qualities of leadership of the best sort, combined with the most likeable human traits, - candor, honesty, horse-sense and a keen sense of humor. Naturally I talked a good deal about the Naval Academy, and gradually he became interested. At last it dawned on me that nothing could please me more than to have him go to the Academy with me. So I proposed to him that he try for an appointment, too. He was intrigued with the idea, but not very sanguine.

"What chance have I got?" he asked. "You already have the only vacancy from this district."

I suggested that he might try the Senators, and he was interested enough to write them both. One had no vacancies, but the other (I believe it was Senator Bristow) wrote that he had vacancies both for Annapolis and West Point. As was very unusual in those days when most appointments were political cumshaw, he was holding competitive exams for them, and he authorized Ike to appear in Topeka in November to compete. It was already September, so he had but little time to prepare. Here was where I came in - again. I had been studying for the same type of exams all summer, and was well up in the methods and shortcuts of the cram school, so we started working together. Every afternoon at about two Ike would come to my office and we would work until about five. During these 3-hour periods I managed to sandwich in enough office work to keep my job, but not much more. Ike's God-given brain sped him along and soon he was way ahead of his self-appointed teacher. In November he journeyed to Topeka and competed with about 20 other applicants. He returned, confident he had done his best, but none too confident of the outcome. That's another trait of his - he always puts forth his best efforts, but never underrates the opposition.

One afternoon he came into the office, grinning that wide, heartwarming grin of his, and waving a letter. The Senator wrote that he had stood *first* in the exam. But there was a catch in it. He also

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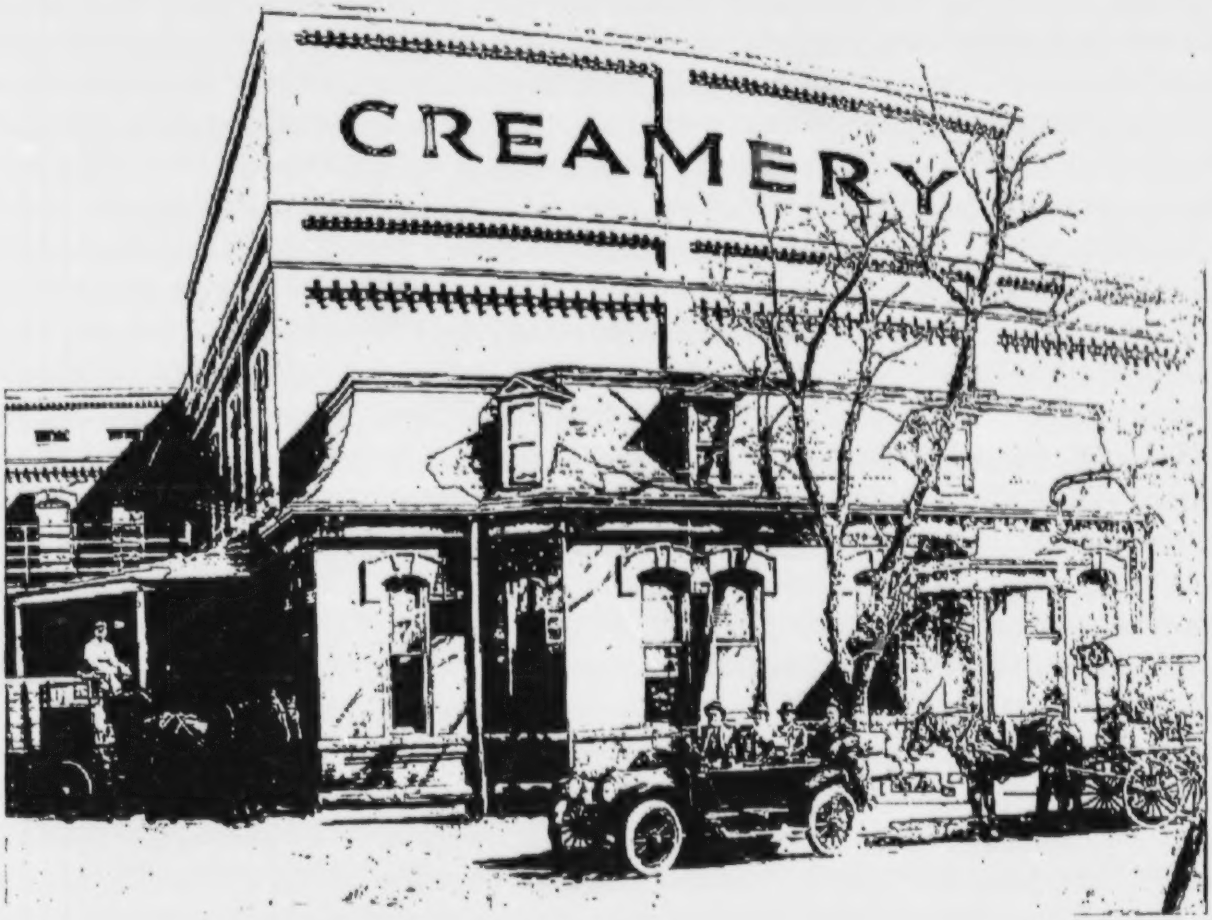
BELLE SPRINGS CREAMERY, 1902
Photograph # 64-481



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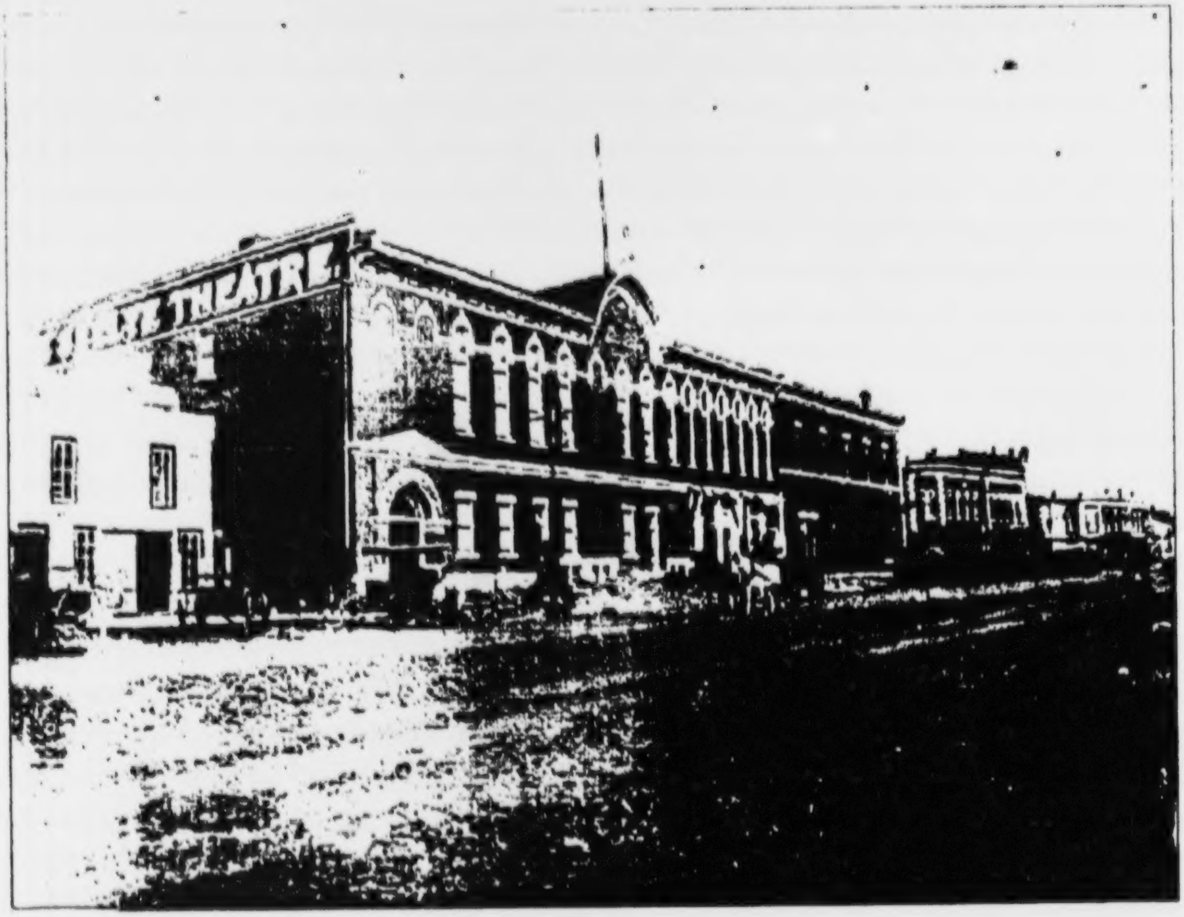
SEELYE THEATER, circa 1905
Photograph # 70-255-11



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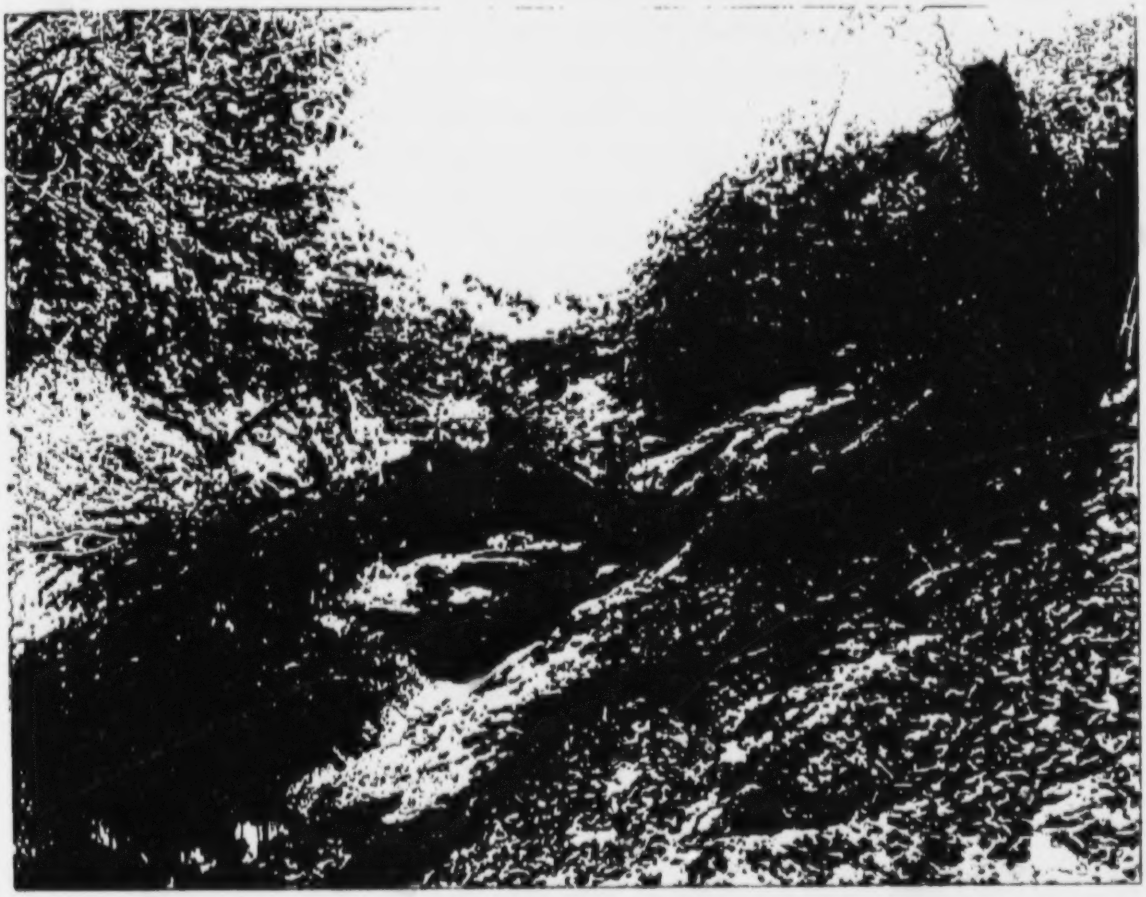
MUD CREEK, circa 1905
Photograph # 70-255-6



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Abram Forney Oral History, 1964

Pages 8-9:

BARBASH: Mr. Forney, could you, please, tell us when you worked the creamery with Dwight Eisenhower and could you tell us any interesting incidents that took place while you worked there with him?

FORNEY: I remember an incident during school vacation when I was employed on the second floor of the building and nailing together butter boxes. I happened to come down through the engine room to the wash room which was on the ground floor. On returning to the second floor I had stopped on the first floor to talk to D.J. Eisenhower—a little conversation—and as we parted he went through the door into the boiler room and I started to return to the second floor. As I stood at the landing going up to the second floor there was this terrific noise. The governor belt on an engine which operated all the churns and the power elevators in the building broke and, of course, there was the engine just "running away" with such velocity that the fly wheel which was about 6 feet in diameter exploded. Portions of that flywheel had broken a steam line, and also, hit one of the ammonia pipes which turned the ammonia pipes loose. I remember very well, standing on that landing, that the first thing I saw was Mr. Eisenhower coming back in and cutting off the steam. This engine was still running, although all it was, was the shaft. He cut off the steam from that ran over and cut off the ammonia from the ammonia tank. Fortunately, if this had happened approximately 10 seconds sooner and where I was standing right in front of this engine talking to Mr. Eisenhower I don't think I would be here today to tell this story.

BARBASH: Mr. Forney, do you remember what kind of work Dwight did at the Creamery and did you ever have an opportunity to work with him?

FORNEY: Well, there was one summer during school vacation that both operated what they called the "ice tank", by taking out 300 pound blocks of ice and dumping and setting them through a chute into the ice room and Dwight had the night shift at that time. I had day shift. His salary was 32.50 and I was given 35.00 a month on the day shift. I had considerably more work to do serving the delivery trucks and the people from outer communities who came in here to purchase ice.

COMMUNITY:

"Never Has This Town Been Outside My Heart and Memory"

In the days of the independent farm and the horse and buggy, where each family was almost self sustaining, certainly the community was self sustaining. We grew our corn and we grew our meat, we grew our vegetables, and the local mills ground the flour and we didn't have much connection with the outside world.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

The town-building boom in the American Midwest in the last half of the nineteenth century can be traced directly to events thirty-five years earlier. At the end of the Civil War, a great migration was set in motion that would continue unabated for the next quarter century. It would not subside until 1890, when the United States government declared the frontier officially closed.

The furious pace of settlement was spurred on by a variety of factors. Farmland in the East was increasingly scarce and very expensive. In 1862, the Homestead Act, which granted 160 acres to anyone who would settle it for at least five years, was a powerful lure to settlement. The railroads, earlier granted public lands by the government as an incentive to lay track, now cashed in on their windfall. In highly-inflated language, pamphlets touting a frontier paradise that was ". . . healthy, fertile, well-watered, well-wooded, and rapidly growing"[1] flooded the East and Europe. Wealthy land speculators waged a fierce competition to populate their freshly platted towns. Their offers to subsidize new businesses and donate lots attracted necessary goods and services. Each town waged a vigorous campaign to become the county seat or state capital in an effort to survive. In response, the people of the Midwestern plains existed in a state of upheaval—pulling up stakes, moving on, and starting over, ever optimistic about the future.

Along rail lines all across the Midwest, new towns were constructed on the same model. The business district emerged beside the railroad tracks, and building lots were priced based on their proximity to the train station. As the population grew, the downtown's shabby one-story wooden buildings were replaced by more substantial two- or three-story, red-brick structures. Still, downtown lacked pavement and curbs, traffic lights, and street signs. Rickety wooden sidewalks reflected a height convenient for customers stepping out of a horse-drawn wagon. At either end of the block were steps that led down to street level. Heavy spring rains transformed dusty streets into a muddy morass, but by late summer, sprinkler wagons were necessary to bring temporary relief to a dust-choked downtown.

This was the age of the horse. Horses and evidence of horses were everywhere: hitching posts, watering troughs, livery stables, wagon ruts, and, of course, the inevitable droppings in the streets. Each town hired a man whose job it was to patrol the streets, armed with a shovel, broom, and wheel barrow, in a nearly futile effort to keep the streets clean. It would be 1910 or so before streets were paved and curbing installed, street signs and house numbers appeared, and the automobile eventually replaced the horse.

The Midwestern towns founded in the late 19th century were populated by middle-class Americans with a fervent faith in the values of democracy, equality, and the American dream for the common man. Small-town inhabitants felt a shared sense of belonging to the community and experienced the benefits of togetherness. People spoke to one another in passing, and news of a stranger in town spread quickly. Whenever there was hardship or tragedy, the community responded swiftly and generously. Over time, the collective memory of places, stories, and unique characters became the town's beloved folklore.

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[1] Lewis Atherton, *Main Street on the Middle Border* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1954), p. 5.

Dicki[n]son County is something deep within me. If I ever lose it, I shall be someone completely different from what I am or want to be.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

There was another side to small-town life, however. These were communities that were predominately Protestant, middle class, and white. Consequently, their customs and values became the norm. Obedience to community standards was expected, and deviations were punished. A fine sense of togetherness could deteriorate rapidly into "nosiness" and neighborly concern into the aggravation of unwelcomed scrutiny. Gossip of "uppity" behavior, poor judgment, and scandal spread as quickly as other community news. In most instances, the public's disapproval or, worse, ostracism served as a swift and certain justice.

The Midwestern small town was, at least in theory, based on the American ideal of the classless society. The reality was that class lines did exist; however, they were flexible barriers that could be penetrated by ambition and hard work. The equality of Midwestern culture was based far more on an equality of opportunity than on equality of condition. Regardless of class, the town's citizens tended to mingle freely. Ambitious and capable families moved up quickly. To cross class lines in a generation or less was not unusual; however, anyone who then "put on airs" was the object of criticism. The expression "living across the tracks" was a common reference to explaining social class distinctions in Midwestern towns. Doctors, bankers, lawyers, and businessmen did well financially and socially and lived on the "right" side of the railroad tracks. Teachers, ministers, and laborers made less money and didn't enjoy the same social status as the town's professional and moneyed elite.

Named "David Dwight" at the time of his birth, Eisenhower was born in Denison, Texas on October 14, 1890. He was the third of seven sons and the only one born outside of Kansas. When Dwight, as he was called, was a year and a half old, the family returned to Abilene.

The Abilene Dwight knew had a population of less than 4000. Founded in 1857, it boomed a decade later as a cattle town at the terminus of the Chisholm Trail. Abilene was but one generation removed from its rough and tumble frontier days as Dwight grew up. Tales of Tom Smith's bravery and the flamboyant style of Wild Bill Hickok captivated him, and any reference to "the war" was understood to mean the Civil War.

Abilene was a typical Midwestern town. Her citizenry considered themselves progressive, boasting six newspapers, a creamery, a telephone company, two business colleges, cigar, organ, and carriage factories, and, most exciting to a young Dwight, the C.W. Parker Amusement Company which made merry-go-rounds and had a circus and skating rink. In 1902, a sanitary sewer system was constructed, and Abilene's streets were paved in 1910. A flood and fire in 1903 damaged much of the town.

Dwight D. Eisenhower's formative years in Abilene shaped and guided him. Throughout his life, he would retain a deep affection for his hometown and the people, events, and scenes of his boyhood. Dwight and most of his childhood friends lived south of the Union Pacific tracks, the "wrong" side. Although aware of the social and economic shortcomings of his south-side status, Dwight embraced life with an engaging grin, optimism, and great ambition for his future.

After World War II, Dwight D. Eisenhower would return home, the most admired and loved man in the world, to declare: ". . . the proudest thing I can claim is that I am from Abilene."

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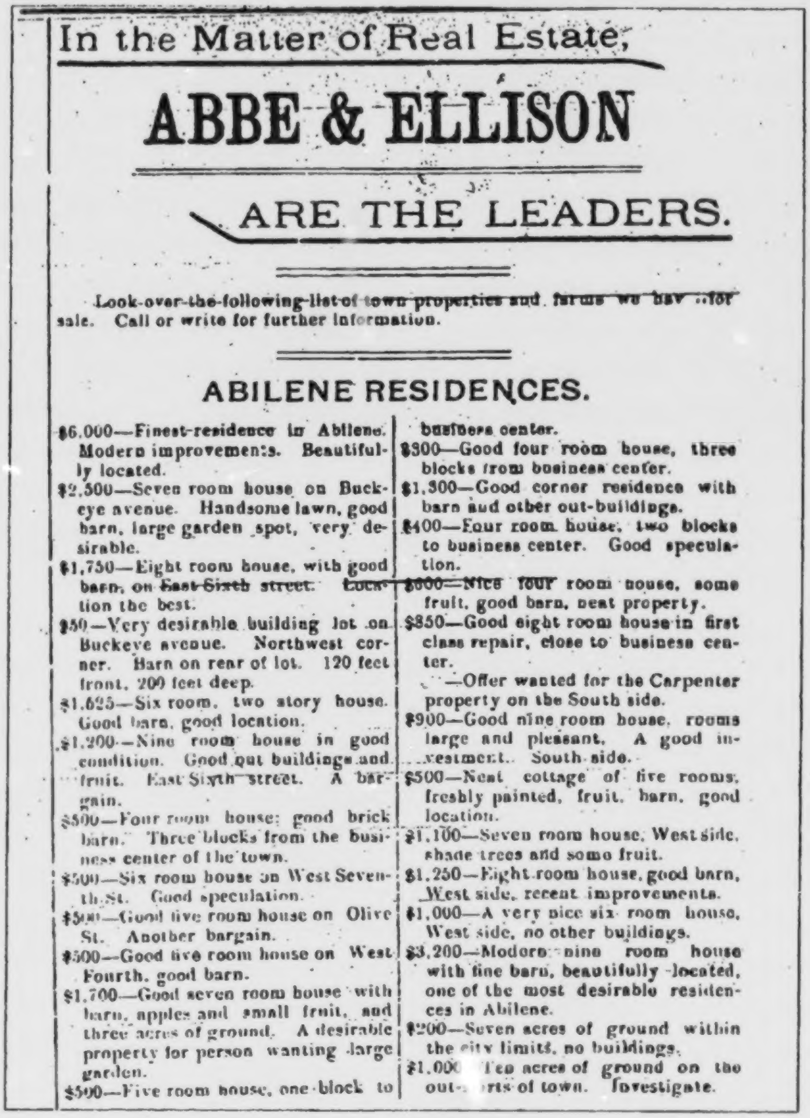
Suggested Readings from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*: 64-69, 74-75, 80-81.

ABILENE WEEKLY REFLECTOR
June 22, 1899, page 1
"Abilene Residences"



In the Matter of Real Estate,

ABBE & ELLISON

ARE THE LEADERS.

Look over the following list of town properties and farms we hav for sale. Call or write for further information.

ABILENE RESIDENCES.

$6,000—Finest residence in Abilene. Modern improvements. Beautifully located.

$2,500—Seven room house on Buckeye avenue. Handsome lawn, good barn, large garden spot, very desirable.

$1,750—Eight room house, with good barn, on East Sixth street. Location the best.

$50—Very desirable building lot on Buckeye avenue. Northwest corner. Barn on rear of lot. 120 feet front, 200 feet deep.

$1,625—Six room, two story house. Good barn, good location.

$1,200—Nine room house in good condition. Good out buildings and fruit. East Sixth street. A bargain.

$500—Four room house; good brick barn. Three blocks from the business center of the town.

$500—Six room house on West Seventh St. Good speculation.

$500—Good five room house on Olive St. Another bargain.

$500—Good five room house on West Fourth, good barn.

$1,700—Good seven room house with barn, apples and small fruit, and three acres of ground. A desirable property for person wanting large garden.

$500—Five room house, one block to business center.

$300—Good four room house, three blocks from business center.

$1,300—Good corner residence with barn and other out-buildings.

$400—Four room house, two blocks to business center. Good speculation.

$600—Nice four room house, some fruit, good barn, neat property.

$850—Good eight room house in first class repair, close to business center.

—Offer wanted for the Carpenter property on the South side.

$900—Good nine room house, rooms large and pleasant. A good investment. South side.

$500—Neat cottage of five rooms, freshly painted, fruit, barn, good location.

$1,100—Seven room house, West side, shade trees and some fruit.

$1,250—Eight room house, good barn, West side, recent improvements.

$1,000—A very nice six room house, West side, no other buildings.

$3,200—Modern nine room house with fine barn, beautifully located, one of the most desirable residences in Abilene.

$200—Seven acres of ground within the city limits, no buildings.

$1,000—Ten acres of ground on the outskirts of town. Investigate.

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IVAN M. FITZWATER ORAL HISTORY, 1970

Pages 4-5:

WICKMAN: When you first went to Abilene, since you were thirteen years old, you may have some memories of first arriving in town, what kind of town was it?

FITZWATER: Abilene, well just one of the nicest places that I ever lived in; it was then. I can tell you, it was just, just a nice place to live.

WICKMAN: Busy town?

FITZWATER: Oh, yes—

WICKMAN: With commercial activities?

FITZWATER: Yes, and so many nice people, oh, we didn't have any slum area. There were several colored families in town, but we never had any trouble with them, as I remember.

WICKMAN: Which side of town did they live in?

FITZWATER: Well, sir, can't tell for sure, maybe if I would drive around I could tell; it was kind of the northwest part of town; it wasn't in the south side, no, no. It seemed to me it was the northwest part of town where most of them lived. And they seemed to like to be among their own kind, and I never heard of one of them ever being in jail. And, by the way, I don't know if Abilene had a jail or not, they must have had. Oh, they must have had one but I can't remember for sure.

Pages 44-45:

WICKMAN: I was wondering, do you remember, surely on your way down to the Smokey Hill or somewhere you must have had a general area around Lincoln School. What was that area like besides—I mean, the Eisenhower home was behind the school, the school was on the school grounds—but what was the general area like down there? Was it homes, or stores, or—

FITZWATER: Oh, most homes.

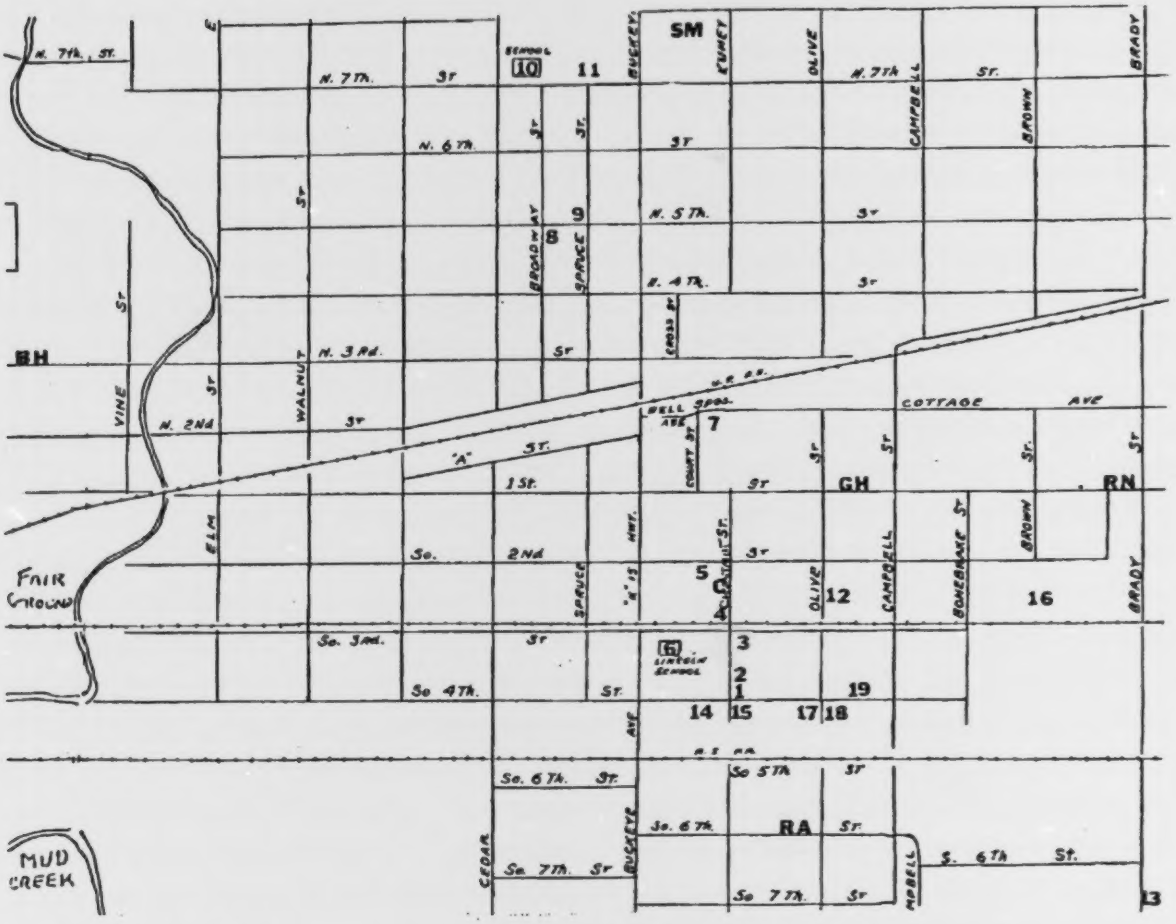
WICKMAN: Homes along there.

FITZWATER: Yes, I think that must have been some of the older part of Abilene, maybe not necessarily so. But they were not shacks, no, it wasn't that way at all, no. In fact Abilene didn't have any real, you know, shantytown or area; we didn't have it. There were some poor families here and there, but respectable. No, Abilene south of the tracks, well, just as nice people lived down, as the ones who lived on the north side it seemed to me, as I remember.

MAP, BOYHOOD ENVI 37 ENTAL AREA HOME, 1900

BOYHOOD ENVIRONMENTAL AREA HOME

1900


N. 7th. St.
N. 7th. St
SCHOOL
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SM
BUCKEYE
KUNEY
OLIVE
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CAMPBELL
BROWN
BRADY
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N. 5th. St
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N. 3rd. St
N. 2nd St
VINE St
WALNUT St
ELM St
BROADWAY St
SPRUCE St
CROSS St
9
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U.P. RR.
BELL SPGS. AVE
COTTAGE AVE
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COURT St
"A" St.
1 St.
GH
RN
So. 2nd
So. 3rd. St
So 4th. St
HWY.
"A" St
SPRUCE
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LINCOLN SCHOOL
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OLIVE
CAMPBELL
BONEBRAKE St
BROWN St
BRADY
FAIR GROUND
R.I. RR.
So. 6th. St.
So 5th St
So. 6th. St.
RA
CEDAR
BUCKEYE AVE
So. 7th. St
So 7th. St
MOBELL
S. 6th St.
13
MUD CREEK

1. Eisenhower Home
2. Eisenhower Barn
3. Romberger House
4. Jacob Eisenhower Home
5. First Home David
6. Lincoln School
7. Bells Springs Creamery
8. City Hall-First High School
9. Dwight-Merrifield Fight
10. Garfield School
11. New High School
12. Parker Winter Quarters
13. Orin Snider House
14. Miermaster House *
15. Hiram Higgins Home*
16. Carnival grounds
17. A. A. Baxter Home *
18. Brigetta Cosgrove Home*
19. D. C. Davis *

Red Asper------RA
Curry's--------C
Bud Huffman ---BH
Gladys Harding GH
Ruby Norman----RN
Six McDonnell--SM

* Dickinson County Title Company

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38

THIRD STREET LOOKING WEST, ABILENE, KS, circa 1905
Photograph # 70-2559

RESOURCES

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Beschloss, Michael R. *Eisenhower: A Centennial Life.* New York: Harper and Row, 1990.

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Miller, Merle. *Ike The Soldier: As They Knew Him.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1987.

Neal, Steve. The Eisenhowers. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1984.

Malott, Deane W. *On Growing Up In Abilene, Kansas: 1898—1916*, 1992**

Staadt, Olive Mitchell. *Gentle Memories: Kansas 1900—1910, 1988.***

There is a wide variety of children's books on Dwight D. Eisenhower available online at bookstores such as Barnes and Noble or Amazon.

VIDEOS:

Dwight D. Eisenhower: Commander-in-Chief, A&E Biography, (middle school to adult)

The American Experience: Eisenhower, PBS, (middle school to adult)

Ike and Abilene, Kansas Heritage Center, Lending Catalogue (all ages)

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ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPTS

FOR THE

1999 DDE DAY

CURRICULUM MATERIALS

HOME & FAMILY:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Milton S. Eisenhower
by
Maclyn P. Burg
on
October 15, 1971
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

This is an interview being done with Dr. Milton Eisenhower. The interviewer is Dr. Maclyn Burg. The interview is taking place on October 15, 1971, 5:00 in the evening, outside and in the Eisenhower family home.

Pages 1-4:

DR. BURG: Now we are entering the house in the way you would have entered it—

DR. EISENHOWER: Yes.

DR. BURG: --as a young lad?

DR. EISENHOWER: Yes, ordinarily I came in this west door all the time.

DR. BURG: And right after school it'd be this door that you'd come through.

DR. EISENHOWER: Well, not only after school. Any time. We used the front door only when company was coming.

DR. BURG: I see.

DR. EISENHOWER: Originally this room we have entered was the kitchen. The stove sat right there. The pantry was out the north door of this room. And normally, when we had no company, we ate in the kitchen. But if Mother was doing something extra special we ate in the adjoining room – the dining room, which later became a second living room when this one was changed from a kitchen into a dining room.

BURG: I see.

EISENHOWER: I was the one – and let me see if I can remember when it was – I was the one who moved the kitchen – did a good deal of the work on the gas and other lines to move the kitchen to the much smaller room out here. I remember when we moved the kitchen I didn't – I couldn't – handle the water pipes, so I didn't move the sink. Sometime later someone came in and moved the sink.

BURG: This room back here.

EISENHOWER: That room, yes.

BURG: Let's step back in there, sir –

EISENHOWER: Yes.

BURG: --if we can.

EISENHOWER: When this room was a pantry, the bathroom was in the small room here to the east. When we made this room into a kitchen, the bathroom was moved to where it is now – next to what was our parents' bedroom. Grandfather Eisenhower had lived until his death in the bedroom that was changed into a bathroom.

BURG: I see. Now how old were you when you were dong the moving?

EISENHOWER: Well, I must have been about 16 years old. Let's go back a bit. I remember when they dug the trenches that brought the city water and the city sewage lines to this house, so obviously I had to be old enough to remember it now. I can still remember the trenches. When I was quite young, my father wired the house for electricity.

BURG: I see.

EISENHOWER: Not an outside electrician; of course, he was something of an engineer.

BURG: Right.

EISENHOWER: I think I remember when the furnace was put in. It was a hot-air furnace. Pipes, large ones, carried the hot air only into rooms on the first floor. So the bedrooms upstairs were mighty cold in the winter. Father put an open metal register in the ceiling of one of the two living rooms, so some warmth thereafter drifted upstairs. Often when I got up in the morning I would stand on that register as I donned my clothes.

Pages 16 – 21:

BURG: Yes, yes. Does it ever strike you - I suppose it must – that such an enormous amount of talent came from this very small house?

EISENHOWER: Well, I've thought about this a whole lot and wondered why. I think I know some of the reasons. We in Abilene were a rural society, very different from the urbanized society with 73 percent of the people living in great urban centers. I feel sorry for parents and young people in the large cities because something we learned here at home at an early age is difficult to teach children in an urban location. Responsibility to us was as much a part – the natural part – of life as eating and sleeping and going to school. I think that this early acceptance, in a perfectly natural way, of responsibility gave us an appropriate attitude toward education, toward our duties as citizens, toward our opportunities, and our obligations in whatever work we undertook. Then may I say that – here I'll have to speak for myself rather than for my brothers – the rule was that two things had to be done before I could play: one, I had to do my chores; second, I had to have every school lesson for the next day letter perfect.

BURG: These were really self-imposed rules or was only the latter self-imposed. Was it your mother who put the first —

EISENHOWER: Mother was the one who established the rules, but soon the regime of work, study, play was just as natural as anything else. I never went to bed with an unsolved problem foe the next day's lessons.

BURG: I see.

EISENHOWER: I was expected to know. I remember one time my Latin teacher said, "Milton Eisenhower, I want you to stay after class." And I did. And she said, "You're using a 'pony.' " Do you know what a "pony" is?

BURG: Yes.

EISENHOWER: I said, "No, I don't have a pony." She said, "Your translations are too perfect, and I don't believe you can do that." I said, "Well, for the time being another teacher, Miss Annie Hopkins, is living at our house and she supervises my studies." While Miss Hopkins' subject was not Latin – but mathematics and other subjects – she was a Latin student. She Would check my translations with me, so by the time I went to school the next day I was thoroughly prepared. Indeed, often I would translate passages from Virgil or Cicero that other students fumbled over.

BURG: Now, if I understand, the other brothers having gone and you the last one here. There was some space; and so you had a teacher living in the house

EISENHOWER: Yes. Keep in mind that Earl and I went through school together; there was only a year and nine months difference in our ages and, as I recall, Earl had been out of school one year because of a bad eye.

BURG: Right.

EISENHOWER: He has been blinded in one eye due to an accident with a knife. And he and I therefore went all through—

BURG: I see.

EISENHOWER: So essentially, everything I did, he did too. Only he was a good athlete, and I wasn't—so that our play-time and study activities were somewhat different.

BURG: Had your scarlet fever bout set you back –

EISENHOWER: I don't have –

BURG: --or anything in that regard?

EISENHOWER: any doubt that it did. You know I was unconscious for two weeks.

BURG: It sounded like a dreadful siege you had.

EISENHOWER: I remember that the doors to the two living rooms were sealed off. Earl and Mother were in there. Earl had been exposes and of course mother served as full-time nurse. The rest of the family lived in the other part of the house. The food would be handed quickly through the door.

BURG: In this, in these two rooms?

EISENHOWER: In those two rooms in there – that's where three of us lived for – I think it was six weeks.

BURG: Six weeks?

EISENHOWER: Yes. For two weeks as I remember – I think my mother told me – I was unconscious. I have no doubt that the scarlet fever left a weakness. To this day my throat where those great swellings came – I guess they eventually burst – is tender. But the only physical problem I've ever had of any serious nature is bad eyes, I was born with those. As a matter of fact, this eye condition of nystagmus is congenital. It could be that scarlet fever made it worse. Incidentally, this is one of my favorite pictures over here. This is – see here – that's Earl and here I am. We're feeding the chickens. That's the only picture I know of taken at that particular time. Those clothes tickle me to death – knickers- you see –

BURG: Yes.

EISENHOWER: --long black socks.

BURG: Yes.

EISENHOWER: And, of course, I wore all the hand-me-downs. Having six older brothers is devastating so far as the clothes you have to wear.

BURG: Yes, yes indeed. There again, we may add another reason for the kind of character that the entire group of you've shown throughout: that you simply took things in stride—this kind of thing. I've read books, of course, that discuss the family and discuss the fact that you had to fight in your own way. You had to fight for the things that you got—work for them hard.

EISENHOWER: Certainly we had to work, but you know I'm absolutely certain that we didn't feel that we were being imposed upon. I mean life was the way it was; it was natural. Of course most of the rest of Abilene people had to work too. Edgar is the only one who ever sensed some difference between the north and south sections of Abilene. You know this is suppose to be the wrong side of the tracks; Edgar was conscious of that. In a book he wrote he made a point of this.

BURG: Yes.

EISENHOWER: I want to say that Earl and I were utterly unconscious of any such thing. And I often talked to Ike about it; and he said, "It's just, I think, a figment of Ed's imagination." But you know we grew so many vegetables and originally fruit that – the fruit orchard was eventually destroyed by a storm – we had things to sell – more than we could consume.

Pages 22 - 24:

EISENHOWER: No, you see, this is – I think this is worth thinking about: How do you give a child in a city real responsibility that's honest? Children are terribly quick to sense the artificial. I mean if you make a child move a sand pile and then tell him to move it back, he knows it's phony.

BURG: Yes.

EISENHOWER: Here, since it was perfectly obvious that the work had to be done and we took it for granted that the lessons for school had to be mastered and all the rest, these things were, as I say, just as natural as sleeping and eating; and no one felt –

BURG: That horse was out there everyday –

EISENHOWER: Oh sure-

BURG: - and had to be fed.

EISENHOWER: That horse was my dearest friend, one of my dearest friends. Silver was her name. I was raised on her. And – no fooling – one of the older brothers – I think it was Ed – had teased her by blowing in her face through a pipe. She took a dislike to him and kicked him in the face one time. But Silver was my friend. I could ride her bareback; I could stand up on her back. That horse knew me, and she was mine.

BURG: Well, you and Roy then could pretty well share her –

EISENHOWER: Earl.

BURG: - Earl, rather –

EISENHOWER: Earl.

BURG: In the last –

EISENHOWER: Yes.

BURG: - years.

EISENHOWER: Oh, yes, sure.

HOME & FAMILY:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with
Reverend Ray I. Witter
by
Walter V. Barbash
on
August 28, 1964
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

This is an oral interview being done on August 28, 1964, with Reverend Ray I. Witter.

Pages 23 – 25:

MR. BARBASH: Rev. Witter, based on your weekend visits and the amount of time that you spent at the Eisenhower home, do you think you could give us a rough idea if what Ida Eisenhower was like, what sort of a woman she was?

REV. WITTER: Well, she was a woman to know her, you can see why the boys respect her as they do today. She had a talent of management in the home, the boys had their work assigned, while there were no sisters or daughters in the home, those boys had their share of the work, no matter what it was, whether it was baking or washing dishes or cleaning up floors. They had their work assigned to them, cleaning up and everything and they could do it. I remember one time the boys stated how they put the dishes away – one would stand at the dish pan, another at the cupboard and they would toss the dishes over like a ball, one to another, and they made fun out of play but Aunt Ida was a great cook and she was very able to manage the household and command respect from her boys, from her family, and there was cooperation in the home e. I'd never known them to disagree, at least, among others when I was there, but she kept her house in good order and she controlled the boys as I would say in short.

MR. BARBASH: Rev. Witter, in line of Ida Eisenhower's beliefs, even though she was not a formal member of the Brethren in Christ Church, several authors have stated that Ida was a pacifist and as a result of this she did not let the boys play war games, do you remember this to be true?

REV. Witter: No, because I played with the boys. In around the time of the Spanish American War, I remember when us boys built our forts, we had imaginary battles against the Spaniards and we played some war games the same as you find boys doing yet today, at least, when we was out to the farm and I don't doubt, but, what she, of course, kept it down to more of a minimum than some places but we played along that line, I well remember.

Pages 29:

MR. BARBASH: Rev. Witter, moving on to another aspect of the family, it , also, has been stated that it was Chris Musser who provided the funds to bring David Eisenhower and Ida up from Texas after he had gone down there following the failure of his general store in Hope, and that David went to work at the creamery at the request of Chris Musser and the rest of the River Brethren and that he, by working at the creamery, paid off this loan, so to speak, do you know anything about this or have you heard anything about it in the family history?

REV. WITTER: No, I haven't heard much about this – about all I know of, they failed down there, things were not as bright as they expected and got in bad circumstances and I can easily see why Chris Musser helped him because Chris was a man there in the creamery for many,

many years and actually I can see where his influence brought David into the creamery as a source of livelihood.

HOME & FAMILY:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with
Mr. L.J. Asper
by
Walter V. Barbash
on
March 20, 1964
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

Pages 2 - 3:

MR. BARBASH: Mr. Asper, can you describe the layout of the Eisenhower family home, that is, the house, the barn, and the garden and so on?

MR. ASPER: Well, the house was about an eight room house, a big square house, the barn set right north of it and it was originally built for a doctor, veterinary doctor, and it had a lot of stalls and had a room where he worked on horses and stuff like that. It belonged to an Eisenhower that was related to Dwight – I think it was Dwight's uncle and all of their ground lived right – laid right east of the farm home and they used to farm garden , alfalfa, and stuff like that and kept cows and chickens and everything – just a small farm.

MR. BARBASH: Mr. Asper, do you remember the incident of Dwight and Edgar climbing to the barn roof and going to the edge and balancing there?

MR. ASPER: No, I don't believe I remember anything like that, I imagine this could have happened all right they was always daring each other.

Asper, do you recall being at the Eisenhower home on Sunday's when the boys had to cook?

MR. ASPER: Yeah, I remember all right. The folks had Church there at the house all the time and the kids wanted anything to eat a lot of times they'd do the cooking themselves and a lot of times we'd go camping and do cooking, too.

MR. BARBASH: Would you consider the boys good cooks?

MR. ASPER: Oh, yeah, I think they were – fine cooks.

Pages 16 – 17:

MR. BARBASH: Mr. Asper, you knew Mr. And Mrs. Eisenhower pretty well, could you tell us what sort of people they were?

MR. ASPER: Oh, they were just wonderful people. I worked for Mr. Eisenhower for three or four years up at the creamery – he was the head engineer and one thing I liked about him – he was always for you all the time. Anytime that you had any trouble or he thought you was in trouble, why, he'd sure go to bat for you.

MR. BARBASH: Mr. Asper, do you remember any incidents where Dwight Eisenhower's father did stick up for you in a work situation?

MR. ASPER: Oh, one time we got into trouble with the boss about something or other and he came over there and took our part – told us not to do what he wanted us to do because we wasn't supposed to do that. It wasn't long after that, why, he left the creamery and went to working for the gas company.

MR. BARBASH: Mr. Asper, do you know why Mr. Eisenhower left the creamery?

MR. ASPER: No, I don't know for sure cause I was gone from there then, but, I think the place down and needed a lot of repairs and they was blaming a lot of the accidents onto him and I think he just walked out and left her set.

MR. BARBASH: Mr. Asper, do you remember what Mrs. Eisenhower was like – what sort of a woman she was like and so on?

MR. ASPER: Oh, she was a beautiful lady, I don't know – awful religious and stuff like that, but, she sure took care of all us kids all right. She treated one of us just like she did the rest of us. She was around there playing, why, you was just like one of her boys – if they got cookies or cake or anything, why, you did too. That was the way she was all the time.

HOME & FAMILY:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with
Nettie Stover Jackson
by
Dr. Maclyn Burg
on
May 5, 1972
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

Pages 17 – 18:

BURG: She [Ida Eisenhower] was talking with you about how she learned to handle people without getting them all riled up.

JACKSON: No, I don't think I remember anything about that, only about the disposition of Roy. Now Roy, you see, was just two years, about, older that I was. But I don't remember one thing about him, and it was Dwight that impressed me. But she did say that Roy could be around, and you wouldn't know he was there.

BURG: Milton of course ---

JACKSON: He was younger you know.

BURG: --quite young.

JACKSON: Just little.

BURG: So you hadn't paid too much attention to him?

JACKSON: No, no.

BURG: And Edgar—

JACKSON: Edgar was older. But he was working, you know, in that store, at least that evening.

; working there – I think it was during the Christmas rush, I think.

BURG: Was it a clothing store?

JACKSON: This was in the basement, and I think it was a department store, I don't know.

Page 20:

BURG: We've not asked you how you felt about David Eisenhower?

JACKSON: He was very dignified, solemn man, very dignified.

WILSON: Very proud man

JACKSON: Evidently. I was looking at a picture the other day. It was taken outdoors, and he had his sleeves rolled back and his collar unbuttoned. Why I was just amazed that he would have a picture taken like that. I think it was taken at that little house before they moved over to the two-story house.

BURG: It still made an impression on you to see him actually in that kind of an undignified dress.

JACKSON: Oh, yes. Now Aunt Ida was the power behind the throne. But she'd never let on. It was always Dave who was the head of the house, and Dave was the head of the house.

Pages 22 – 26:

JACKSON: Well, this was just told to me. I don't remember whether it was Grandfather Eisenhower that asked the blessing before the meal, and then after the meal you didn't leave the table until this aunt had returned thanks. And I suppose you know what a stool is. It's a kitchen chair with the back that's been broken off of it or gone. Anyhow Dwight sat on one of those – they called them stools. And Dwight would be so anxious to get out, and it worried Aunt Ida because she said, "He'd never make a sound. But he'd get turned around from the table, and the minute she said 'Amen', he was off and gone like a shot."

BURG: While everyone's head was down, he was making the swing already.

JACKSON: He was all ready to go. When the last sound of the amen was out, he was gone. And Uncle Milton said that that worried Aunt Ida. She was just afraid that he wouldn't turn out very well.

BURG: The anyone who wasn't willing to stay there and render thanks.

Well, he did. He stayed! You stayed! You stayed all right.

BURG: But his back was to the table by the time it was over.

JACKSON: No one left the table till – Now I don't know. It might have been the other way around that she asked the blessing and Grandfather returned thanks.

BURG: Of course, when you saw the house, you were a young girl. Do you remember, was it pretty much a happy house?

JACKSON: Oh, yes, there wasn't friction there.

BURG: The father was solemn –

JACKSON: Yes, there wasn't any friction there. She'd know enough not to have anything said, and the boys, they knew enough to behave. All the fun that I remember about was telling you about that riddle that Dwight told me. That's the only one I remember.

BURG: But you recollect it as being a pretty happy house to be in.

JACKSON: Oh, yes, yes, yes. She had that happy appearance, and I was thinking this morning—I was looking a a picture that was taken of the boys when they were all up in

Wisconsin, and Edgar had his head thrown back and laughing. And Milton, when we were there

for breakfast 1 of March, I don't know what caused him to or what I had said or what, but, anyhow, he just laughed to beat the band. I doubt his father ever laughed out loud in his life. You can erase that.

BURG: In other words, a religious household that was not solemn and grim in any way.

JACKSON: No. Did you ever see that drawing of the pyramids that Uncle Dave made?

WILSON: Yes.

BURG: I've never seen it.

WILSON: I'm, familiar with it. I can't remember seeing it, but I know what you are talking about.

JACKSON: I wish I had studied it more. But he was a studious man. I can see why he didn't want to be a farmer. He impressed you as never being dirty and always clean – well a farmer can't be always clean. But he always, you know, he just kept a distance. But he was a scholar.

WILSON: He always took everything very seriously.

JACKSON: Oh, yes.

WILSON: When he studied the Bible, I understand that he just really devoted a great amount of time to it.

JACKSON: He studied it. Now Aunt Ida studied it for the good she'd get out of it, but I think he was interested in the, well, like the dimensions in the pyramid and so on.

BURG: He was always kindly to you in your relationship, distant but –

JACKSON: Distant, just distant. No, there wasn't anything that was unkindly, no. But I don't remember ever having said a word to him. He wasn't well the last time we were there, and my youngest boy, this must have been about 1940, and we tad taken some watermelons up, my mother and sister and I. She had a little boy, and I had a four-year-old. So we decided before dinner that we'd take those youngsters out on the back porch, you know, it's sort of enclosed, there where they have the dry sink, or did have it. Take them out there, and then they wouldn't have this watermelon all over. Anyhow, all I remember is he looked at us, feeding the children first, you know, and not having them come to the table. But we had to help them with their food, and so my sister and I decided we'd let them eat out on the porch first. And I remember we tool the watermelon out there because that was the thought back there of taking them back on the porch so they wouldn't --. But anyhow I can remember him looking and – we sure did something wrong by letting them eat first.

BURG: But he never said it. He just looked at you but he never –

JACKSON: He never said a word but, boy, you could just see that look. Course he wasn't well

Nettie Stover Jackson Oral History

Pages 36 –39:

BURG: Yes, the one [Eisenhower home] in Abilene, being preserved as it was.

JACKSON: Oh, yes. Yes, that west window in the, well, she had her piano in that room, but over in that west window she had a few flowers, but they had their reading material in that. And she had a, it seemed to me, a little rocker; I called it a sewing rocker, there by that west window. And then out this way from the house, northwest from the house, she had a bed of lilies. She didn't have a lot of other –

BURG: Are they calla lilies?

JACKSON: No, no, they're Madonna lilies. They get up so high, and they're very fragrant.

BURG: Wonder if those are still there, Don?

JACKSON: No, no, they're gone.

WILSON: Do you remember when you were there in 1904, the big barn? Was it still standing?

JACKSON: Yes, there was a barn there then. I'm sure there was because they had the horse there that had been --

WILSON: The veterinarian's.

JACKSON: Yes, Uncle Dave's brother.

WILSON: We've tried to track down when that was taken down, but you say that it was still there as late as 1904.

JACKSON: Oh, I know it was. I'm sure it was. I'm sure it was. Because they didn't build anything else. The barn was out there and the chicken house there, too.

ırden was out directly east.

JACKSON: Yes, east.

BURG: Now when we talked with Milton in the home and he saw the piano, he laughed about it and said that he'd enjoyed playing it after dinner and couldn't understand for quite some time why his father would rise from his reading and come over and close the door. Then it occurred to him that, playing as loud as he was playing, he was disturbing his father's reading and study. Who was playing it when you were there? In that earlier period, was –

JACKSON: I don't remember of anyone playing it.

BURG: Ida presumably knew how to play it.

JACKSON: Oh, I think she knew but, oh, you get so busy with all the things that are involved, the things that have to be done. And possibly with us being there it made more of course.

BURG: Yes, that could be too. Mrs. Jackson says that for the life of her she cannot remember where she slept in that house, and it had to be crowded.

JACKSON: No, I can't remember when we were little; I haven't the least idea. Seems to me she said something about making pallets. Well, of course, in our old house when I was a youngster, my mother made pallets on the floor. When we had company, why you didn't think about being crowded. It was kind of fun to sleep on the floor. And our house was always Grand Central Station for both sides of the house because my dad loved company, and my mother loved to cook. So our house was where everybody came, both sides. Uncle Worth and Aunt Laura came from Virginia in 1912, and, oh, Dad wanted them to stay longer, but they weren't going to travel on Sunday, weren't going to ride the train on Sunday.

BURG: Mrs. Jackson, in that Eisenhower home with that many boys, life couldn't have been ever remember Ida discussing with you problems that she had or was she one more to keep it to herself?

JACKSON: I think she ironed out the problems right as she went along. Whatever came up, right then she took care of it.

BURG: It didn't hang on?

JACKSON: No, I don't think it did. She was an unusual woman. Of course part of that could be prejudice because I loved her so much.

CHURCH & RELIGION:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Rev. Ray I. Witter
on
August 28, 1964
by
WALTER V. BARBASH
Oral Historian
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

This is an oral interview on August 28, 1964, with Rev. Ray I. Witter.

Pages 1-3:

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, will you, please, identify yourself and tell us in what manner you are related to General Eisenhower?

REV. WITTER: My mother and his father were brother and sister.

MR. BARBASH: Rev. Witter, can you, please, tell us what were Wadesian and Piestic movements in Europe and what influence they had on the founding of the Brethren in Christ Church?

REV.WITTER: I would say that the influence being handed down was the greater influence from what I have been informed. Some of their methods and ways of worship and doctrine of beliefs and so on had its bearing and influence upon some of the early men that established or were instrumental in starting the Church.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, would you, please, tell us how the Brethren in Christ Church was founded in the United States?

REV.WITTER: Yes, it was founded along the Susquehanna River there in Pennsylvania and started with two brothers. They were the first ones that, just about the same time that the United Brethren started, so as time went on in some of their beliefs which were separate than any that they could feel at home in any other churches. Speaking of these United Brethren who started theirs said "why don't you do like we did" and so they agreed they would, so these brothers baptized each other and never would tell which was the first member of the Church. But from, then on, as they continued in their services the additions were added to the Church and it grew.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, what were the names of the brothers and what was the basic belief regarding baptism of the Church at this time?

REV.WITTER: Well, these two Engle brothers were the first—the instigators of the Church and the records state this very clearly, but they held their first meetings in the houses and, then, the matter of baptism, they baptized by immersion—trine immersion, which means three times forward in the name of the Trinity. While we don't teach that baptism washes away sins or has any conversion to it, but we believe it is for believers and for those who have received Christ.

Their having baptized in the river is where the nickname came—they were called River Brethren at first because of two things—some traditions say it was because they baptized in the river that was a convenient place, where the Church started is right along the river and other traditions is that it was because they lived along the river and as the Church grew, some of those brethren at a distance, it was not common for then to say "let's go down by the river and see how our brethren are getting along", hence, the name River Brethren got started as a nick name, only.

Page 7:

From the start of the Church—was one of the things that has always been taught against and also in many forms of entertainment—such as dancing and shows, wrong kind of shows, and exciting places. They lived rather reserved separate life from all these things. They strongly emphasized to abstain from all the appearance of evil and that light and darkness can not mix and the Christian life is a separate life, a clean life, that there is many things that don't go along with real Christian living according to Bible teaching. So, they taught separation from many things which are going on around about, tobacco and liquor were out, drinking, and gambling and all those things, worldly gatherings and customs were out. They believed in more of a simple life, dedicated life and they found their entertainment, enjoyment, largely, in the Church alone—was very pronounced in the early Church.

Pages 9-11:

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, would you explain the ordinance of the love feast?

REV.WITTER: The love feast was a great annual occasion. We used to get some of the biggest crowd's right here in the county. As a boy, I well remember when we'd have such overflow crowds that we had extra preaching outside in the yards, they couldn't get in the Church—usually came together in Saturday morning—preparation was made and meals were served, a simple meal in the church in the basement, and daytime was a time of examination, the morning was an inspirational service, in the afternoon there were two scriptures used—the Fourth of Ephesians and 1st Corinthians the 11th Chapter in reference to the prayer veiling, for the sisters and these messages were along the line of clean living and proper relationship between the members, no unforgiveness, and there was frequently quite a time if anyone cried unforgiveness before they came to the Communion table in the evening that was cleared up, straightened up, teaching was that it should be, before the Communion service and was often carried out. So there was, also a time of testimony which often times was quite an inspirational part of the service where different ones testified to their real experiences and blessing which they had attained and were enjoying.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, could you, now, tell us a little bit about the veiling of the sisters, what is the belief based on and what form of veiling do the sisters wear?

REV.WITTER: This is centered upon Corinthians, which has already been cited, and we noticed in the scripture there Jesus or where the apostle, Paul, rather makes it clear that man's head should be uncovered, inasmuch as he is the Glory of God, and women, being created for man—man is her head and we look upon it like this—Christ is our Head and then man and then woman and this sign of authority by the prayer veiling gives her the right to pray or prophecy in service, public assemblies, the same as anyone else. We call it a prayer veiling but the same word days that a woman's head should be covered, or a revised version veiled in her approach in recognition of her head and as her being subordinate. The prayer veilings were usually of a white material and made conveniently to be worn on the head in public worship and there are those that felt to wear it more to the extent that whenever they prayed they felt that they should have their head veiled.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, could you describe the two different types of veiling that the women wear?

REV. WITTER: Yes, there is the prayer veiling—this prayer veiling required something different to fit and be practical so women wore a bonnet which was placed over the prayer veiling as a matter of convenience and as a matter of their own making and the two go together really from a practical standpoint.

Pages 21-23:

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, I wondered if you could remember enough to describe an average weekend that you spent at the Eisenhower Home.

REV. WITTER: Yes, along with our playing, there was strict discipline in the home, but not unreasonable and Aunt Ida was a great cook, knew how to prepare a great table, and discipline was such that when "yes" was said it was obeyed and when "no" was said it was obeyed and the word was law, respected, highly respectd. I remember the first thing in the morning when breakfast was ready, was the family worhip, Uncle Dave, the father, always read the Bible and we all bowed together around this circlein prayer. That was in the beginning of the day, prayer was often given at every meal three tims a day and that was expected. I remember on Sunday they had Bible study in the home and the adults they gathered together—the children were not included in that but the boys were sent to the Brethren in Christ Sunday school here on 7th and Buckeye and there is where they attended Sunday school.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, I believe you attended Sunday school with Dwight Eisenhower, what kind of a Sunday school student was he?

REV. WITTER: Well, I think Dwight, it could be said was about as common as any that particular age when the teacher wonders, sometimes, whether they are getting anything across because the boy's interest often times are varied—many times, quite far away. But I can't remember Dwight as being a great debater or strong inquirer, he wasn't out spoken, but polite, as all of the boys were raised to be but that is as far as I remember of their conduct. They knew what it was to behave in Church—they had that orders and they were, also, reverent in church when they went to services.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, did the Eisenhower boys and, particularly Dwight, attend the Brethren in Christ Church regularly or did they attend other Churches in town and did Dwight ever become a member of the Brethren in Christ Church?

REV. WITTER: No, Dwight never became a member and they never attended other Churches of any degree, otherwise, to my knowledge.

MR: BARBASH: Rev. Witter, was Mrs. Eisenhower a member of the Brethren in Christ Church?

REV. WITTER: I had this question on my mind and more recent year when Aunt Amanda Musser was still living and her mind was clear, because of different views being taken around by different ones and I asked her "Did Aunt Ida ever belong to the Church?" and Aunt Amanda said, "No, she did not", but she worked along, helped along, and came along for a number of years and cooperated.

MR. BARBASH: Rev. Witter, was David Eisenhower, Dwight's Father, a member of the Brethren in Christ Church?

REV. WITTER: No, I understand he, neither, belonged to the Church as much as he had, for a while there, supported it and went right along, but I couldn't find out, even Aunt Amanda that I'd asked, she didn't have knowledge of his ever being a member.

Pages 28-29:

MR. BARBASH: Rev. Witter, I'd like to get into a little bit of the family history now, there has been quite a bit of writing and talking about Ida Eisenhowers connection with the Jehovah's Witnesses Church, I wonder if you could give us any background or if you can tell us anything that you remember from family talk about this.

REV. WITTER: I remember this, I didn't know what it was in the early years—they generally referred to that Sunday Afternoon meeting as a Bible Class but as that continued on and on, why, I discovered it was Jehovah's Witness meeting which they, the parents, attended. It was held at their home occasionally, later on it was held at other places and while they didn't have ordained ministers—they had their form of doctrine and interpretation of the Bible that they followed.

MR.BARBASH: Do you know how Ida Eisenhower became interested in the Church and how she was brought into the Church?

REV. WITTER: I'm not able to say who interested her but there was a time and period of her life, this was what my aunt told me, when she was seeking satisfaction of her own experience, she run across this doctrine and got started reading and finally absorbed it and took up with it.

But father, in later years, of course, gave it up—he couldn't go on through with it. I visited him before he died and had the satisfaction that he dropped out from that belief—from that doctrine.

Pages 38-41:

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, could you tell us, now, what a service is like in the River Brethren in Christ Church as it is, as it exists today, [1964] just to give us an idea of the difference between the early Church and the present Church?

REV. WITTER: Yes, there is quite a difference today, in this age in which we live. Our services today we have music in the Church, nearly every Church has an organ and, occasionally other instruments are used. There is special singing—solos, duets, and quartets, choruses and choirs and the Sunday Schools are well organized and the services are, usually, given out by bulletins, you know ahead when you come to Church Sunday morning what's expected, and the ministers now are supported pastorates and only one man at a place, he may have a lay minister or call on somebody else in case of emergency but, services copy quite closely along with other Churches today on various lines.

MR.BARBASH: Is the Church still pacifist in its belief toward war?

REV. WITTER: Yes, we still maintain a pacifist view and our young men are taking, 1W service, alternate service, in various institutions which are recommended by the government and are serving other places—some of the men have for a number of years served those two or three years without any compensation even from the government—done something that was helpful, something that was a ministry to suffering humanity. As many of our boys feel that the soldier boys make a sacrifice, they, too, ought to be willing to make a sacrifice—some have even given themselves as guinea pigs to experiment on the different vaccines, medicines, and they have gone into all kinds of labor in mental hospitals and what have you, so many things that way, the government has recommended for the boys to engage in to spend their several years of time and receive an honorable discharge.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, I noticed that you are wearing clerical dress, could you, please, tell us how long this has been part of the tradition of the Brethren in Christ Church?

REV. WITTER: As far back as I remember, our ministry has always maintained a clerical garb. It's being lost sight of today this is quite general, in years gone by because I remember Methodist, Baptists, and various churches wore the Prince Albert coat or military collar or had a clerical vest and we believe the ministry should be identified, let you know who he is when you meet him and quite a lot of our men yet today wear the clergy and some are leaving it off perhaps it may be lost sight of in the course of years.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, do the male members of your Church still wear beards and cut their hair in a special way and wear very plain clothes?

REV. WITTER: No, very little, some of the older ones do but beards had been discarded. It's very rare thing to find anyone any more, naturally, in the years gone by that didn't even mean as much. If you follow up the army records, you will find that it was a case of "have to" back in the Civil War back in through three, it was considered as a case of dignity and it didn't mean as much back in those years but it's rapidly being lost sight of, you may go quite a while now until you find one that does any more and the Church is changing on this line.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, I think that concludes our interview and unless you have anything to add, anything that you have thought of, since the interview began that you think would be worth leaving to the historians who will use this interview I would like to end this interview and express to you the most heartfelt thanks of the staff of the Eisenhower Library for giving them the opportunity to interview you and giving us the opportunity, let us say, of interviewing you and giving the historians a little piece of something to work with.

REV. WITTER: I think I could say this with all due respect to any other groups—that the group that came out here from Pennsylvania and the elderly people will substantiate my statement, were very progressive people and they were industrious and were great farmers and they made contributions to the country that are, I think I can say, are enjoying the impact of it yet today. We have had a very good heritage from those that come out from the east and settle up this country and I think some of the cooperation and some of the commonness that gave service to all men under, some times, sacrifice could be renewed but I appreciate my heritage and I'm glad for my background.

MR.BARBASH: Rev. Witter, I'd like to thank you very, very much.

SCHOOL & EDUCATION:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Orin Snider
on
October 6, 1964
by
Walter V. Barbash
Oral Historian
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

This is an oral history interview with Orin Snider on October 6, 1964.

Pages1-4:

MR.BARBASH: How did you first meet him? [Dwight D. Eisenhower] Did you live near him?

MR.SNIDER: Oh, yes

MR.ENDACOTT: He lived right across over here in this house—

MR.SNIDER: I lived about a half-mile southeast of here.

MR.ENDACOTT: He was raised right there along side of him.

MR.BARBASH: You grew up with him and Red Asper, then, didn't you?

MR.SNIDER: Well, I was older

MR.BARBASH: Oh, I see. Did you play with him when you were a youngster or were you still too old to do that?

MR.SNIDER: Well, I was a little old for him and more with Ed.

MR.BARBASH: Did you ever go on any of their vegetable selling expeditions?

MR.SNIDER: No, I was too busy on the farm.

MR.BARBASH: How about high school—you coached him in just his graduate year—right?

MR.SNIDER: Postgraduate.

MR.BARBASH: Postgraduate?

MR.SNIDER: Yeah. They didn't have any rules against postgraduate—those days.

MR.ENDACOTT: What kind of a team did they have that year? —Pretty good?

MR.SNIDER: Well, that was a pretty fair team, they won a little over half of their games, I don't know, I don't think in those days—we didn't try to teach the fundamentals too much—didn't go in for hard football—just more fun.

MR.ENDACOTT: Did they have a regular schedule that the schools they played between the schools just like they do now?

MR.SNIDER: Yeah.

MR.ENDACOTT: Who set those things up? The coaches?

MR.SNIDER: Oh, coaches and the principals.

MR.BARBASH: How come you were picked to be the coach?

MR.SNIDER: Well, they didn't have anymoney to hire a coach then—I was one of the poor man's coaches.

MR.ENDACOTT: Didn't they pay you any salary?

MR.SNIDER: No, I farmed during the day and when it was corn shucking time I'd shuck corn till about a half hour before school was out and go in and hitch the horse and buggy and go in and coach them—I'd go in about three times a week—then I did all the refereeing—didn't have the money to hire a referee.

MR.BARBASH: What was your practice like—did you have any set routine in practice or did you just get the boys together and show them a few plays or what?

MR.SNIDER: Well, of course, we had to have our signals figured out and give them their plays.

MR.ENDACOTT: What position did Ike play there—half back?

MR.SNIDER: No. Left Tackle.

MR.ENDACOTT: Left tackle?

MR.BARBASH: If you could call it a system—what kind of a system did you use?

MR.SNIDER: Well, there wasn't muchsystem to it—but get in there and give them a few fake plays and try to teach then who to hit and when to hit them.

Page 6:

MR.BARBASH: What sort of uniform did you have for the team?

MR.SNIDER: Anything they could pick up.

MR.BARBASH: Where did they get them—who paid for them—the school?

MR.SNIDER: They did.

MR.BARBASH: They paid for their own?

MR.SNIDER: Uh-huh. We bought one football—beginning of the year and we saved that—we had an old one left over from the year before and we saved the new one for the games and the next year why we used that for practice and they just had to pick up their own uniforms.

MR.BARBASH: I see.

MR.ENDACOTT: There wasn't any color arrangement or anything else on it then, was there?

MR.SNIDER: No colors or sweaters.

MR.ENDACOTT: How could you tell the other side then?

MR.SNIDER: Well, you just had to take your chance.

Pages 23-25:

MR.BARBASH: How about pulling guards—did you use pulling guards?

MR.SNIDER: No.

MR.BARBASH: How about the forward pass—did you use the forward pass often in those days?

MR.SNIDER: Yeah, but Bud Hoffman did all of that—he was really good.

MR.BARBASH: It was legal then, huh? The forward pass?

MR.SNIDER: Oh, yes, the last year I played—1906—went to high school—1906—is when they started it.

MR.BARBASH: How about the shape of the football—it was more round in those days?

MR.SNIDER: It was larger.

MR.BARBASH: I see.

MR.SNIDER: You couldn't—it was harder to pass than the football now, you couldn't—Bud could throw a spiral but he was the only one that I ever saw that could do it.

MR.BARBASH: Who was your drop kicker then—wasn't the drop kick pretty good those days with the almost round ball?

MR.SNIDER: No, we didn't try much of that—we went for touchdown.

MR.BARBASH: How about the extra point?

MR.SNIDER: Well, Bud kicked those, but if I remember—I know when I was playing a few years before that why, they only count one point—touchdown 5 and point after touchdown was 1 point.

MR.BARBASH: How many players did you have on the team in those days?

MR.SNIDER: Eleven

MR.BARBASH: Eleven?

MR.SNIDER: Carried two substitutes.

MR.BARBASH: That's all?

MR.SNIDER: Yeah. Two substitutes and always carried our own official.

MR.ENDACOTT: How did you get from one town to the other—by train?

MR.SNIDER: Train.

MR.BARBASH: Did the boys pay their own fare?

MR.SNIDER: No, the school they played would send them generally 14 or 15 tickets.

MR.BARBASH: I see.

MR.SNIDER: On the train.

MR.BARBASH: How about this story of them jumping the freight, do you remember that one—when they had to—didn't have money to get to the next town?

MR.SNIDER: I don't think there's anything to that.

Pages 28-29:

MR.BARBASH: Wes Merrifield was in town about six months ago and he claims that Ike didn't win that fight with him—that Wes really won—do you know what the true story on that is?

MR.SNIDER: No, the way I always heard was a kind of a draw that Ike met him once when he was back and asked him if he had any ambitions to try it again and he said that he was the most unambitious man in Abilene—Ike grew and he didn't. Well, we always had trouble when these South side kids had to go up to North side to take that 7th and 8th grade and they always tried to hang it on to us. My brother got in a fight with a Negro and two of them jumped on to him and he said "Where is the kid?" and I dropped my old dinner box and plowed in, one Negro whirled and hit me and he knocked me about 15 feet, I was sit down against a big elm tree, teacher came a running down and she grabbed them and he had knocked me so far she didn't even know I was in the pack.

MR.ENDACOTT: They don't seem to have that trouble any more though, do they?

MR.SNIDER: No. They've got—I don't know the farmer kids had learned a little bit and the—they just kinda respect them a little more than they used to.

MR.ENDACOTT: We don't have that trouble between the south side and the north side any more.

Pages 33-36:

MR.ENDACOTT: Well, where did you practice football here—where was your football field?

MR.SNIDER: Let's see—when Ike was playing it was at the fair grounds.

MR.ENDACOTT: Out at the old fair grounds or the ones where we are now?

MR.SNIDER: The ones where we are now but before that why we were at the old fair grounds.

MR.BARBASH: Where were the old fair grounds located?

MR.ENDACOTT: That's over where the city dump is now—that used to be the circus grounds and the fair grounds and I don't know how they ever happened to move over here but they bought this ground over here and put the fair grounds over there. I don't know what year—it's been there ever since I can remember.

MR.BARBASH: How about—you practiced and played your games at the fair ground or just practiced?

MR.SNIDER: Well, no, we used to practice over at the Garfield—we didn't have any play ground. That was where the City Auditorium is now and we'd go up there and practice—too far to go out to the fair grounds. This was in 1906.

MR.ENDACOTT: You played your games out there, though?

MR.SNIDER: Yeah, I think the best game we ever had—in the time that I was playing was [$]14.10.

MR.BARBASH: You mean they charged admission?

MR.SNIDER: Yeah.

MR.BARBASH: Do you remember what the admission charge was?

MR.SNIDER: A quarter.

MR.BARBASH: A quarter?

MR.ENDACOTT: You didn't get very many customers then if you only got fourteen dollars in.

MR.BARBASH: Where did the money go—what was it used for?

MR.SNIDER: Car fare and expenses and they claim that Ike's athletic association was the first one ever had—we had one when I was in school there—we had everybody—pretty near everybody signed up and we'd have a two bit assessment whenever we'd run out of money, we just made an assessment—but we didn't begin to break even.

MR.ENDACOTT: Gosh, no, you couldn't—I bet you had more people sneak in than you got paid, though, didn't you?

MR.SNIDER: Yeah, they sneaked in on us and come across the creek and come in from the west side.

MR.ENDACOTT: There was no fence around it or anything was there?

MR.SNIDER: Huh?

MR.ENDACOTT: No fence around the ball field?

MR.SNIDER: No.

MR.BARBASH: How about the referees—you say that you refereed yourself—there were no paid referees in this area at that time?

MR.SNIDER: No. Oh, I worked with some paid referees—Chapman had one out there one time. I had to carry a rulebook to prove my points to him once in a while.

MR.BARBASH: How about the—I think of the authors mentioned a baseball game against Kansas State that Ike played in, did you ever remember that? Six was pitching and Ike was playing right field—the story goes that Ike muffed a fly or something and lost the game for Six.

MR.SNIDER: Well, you can prove that very easily by looking at that post card—who that was against—I think it was against Junction City.

MR.BARBASH: Junction City, Huh?

MR.ENDACOTT: Yeah, it says Junction City right on that card—it wasn't against Kansas State.

MR.SNIDER: Chapman's the only one that I know of that played Kansas State one year—Kansas State beat them pretty bad.

Pages 44-46:

MR.BARBASH: What kind of helmets did you have?

MR.SNIDER: Well, we'd get a women's stocking and cut it off and tie a knot around that and roll it and put it over our heads.

MR.BARBASH: How about padding—did you have shoulder pads?

MR.SNIDER: Yeah. The farmer boys would bring in sweat pads from the horses and they would cut that in chunks about that big a square and pass them around and they would sew them in their sweaters for shoulder pads.

MR.BARBASH: How about—did you use hip pads?

MR.SNIDER: No.

MR.BARBASH: How about thigh pads?

MR.SNIDER: About what?

MR.BARBASH: Thigh pads?

MR.SNIDER: Oh, some of them had rattan strips and some had quilted—about that thick—about like and—

MR.BARBASH: What kind of material were the pants made of?

MR.SNIDER: Oh, duck and mine—my dad wouldn't buy me any so Frank Parent was coaching then and gave me a pair of football pants—mine was that white cotton cloth and a little bit of quilting on it.

MR.BARBASH: How about you—the shoes—did they have football shoes?

MR.SNIDER: Well, we took a pair of kinda worn out dress shoes and we'd nail one cleat that way—well, that's all the cleat we had that there V-shape and we'd do it ourselves.

SCHOOL & EDUCATION:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
John F. "SIX" McDonnell
by
J. Earl Endacott
on
February 26, 1970
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

Pages 8-11:

McDONNELL: That's right. Well, anyway, I didn't care much about football, but I did play quarterback for three years I think, the last three years. But there I was thinking about making that baseball club; I was a baseball player.

ENDACOTT: That was always what you liked.

McDONNELL: Yes, and I was pretty good at it. And here come these two big guys across the playgrounds, you know, Dwight and Ed. Well, they was the big shots in our school you know, campus, whatever you call it, and hollering at me, "Hey, Six come here." And I wondered what the heck they wanted with me so I went over there and I swagger, "What do you want?" "Well," they says, "I'm President of the Athletic Association and we're going to start baseball pretty soon now, middle of February", I think he said, "and have you been considering going out for the ball club?" And I said, "Yes, I have. I think I can make your ball club, as an outfielder." And they says, "We got news for you, you're going to be the pitcher." Yeah, just like that. And I said "Pitcher, I'm no pitcher, I'm an infielder." I'd played kid ball in the infield, second base. I was left-handed and that's no good either you know, but I didn't know anything different then. I could field and I could throw but I said, "I'm no pitcher." They said, "Oh, we think you are. Anyway our big pitcher has moved to Colorado." That was a fellow named Gene Eddy, remember him?

ENDACOTT: I didn't even know him.

McDONNELL: He was the big football star and a pitcher too, and their family moved to Colorado. So he says, "We haven't got any pitcher and you're going to be the pitcher." I said again, "Why, I don't know anything about pitching." "Well, we've been watching you play out here on the playgrounds and everywhere and you have a great arm and you got the best arm in school and you're going to be the pitcher." "O.K. I'll give it a try." So I was the pitcher and I didn't know—

ENDACOTT: And you were a good one too, according to the—

McDONNELL: Well, I won five and lost five, that wasn't very good.

ENDACOTT: Well, that was 500 per cent, that's pretty good.

McDONNELL: Yes, but you know in the next three years, I wasn't beaten by a high school team.

ENDACOTT: Yes, you played even the KU [Kansas University] freshman team once.

McDONNELL: Yes, I lost that game.

ENDACOTT: You lost that game.

McDONNELL: Dwight lost it for me; he claimed he did anyway.

ENDACOTT: Yes, he told me that one time. He said, "You know that damn Six, I lost the ball game for him."

McDONNELL: Well, he really didn't, but he really worried about that. That was when I started to realize what a fine character he had. Well, the way it was, I think the game was 1 to 0 in our favor, or 2 to 0, I forget which, about the seventh inning. KU had a left-handed pitcher by the name of Doyle who was on the freshman team, of course. The next three years he was on the KU varsity and was a real good pitcher, but I had him beat, I think it was 1 to 0.

SCHOOL & EDUCATION:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Lelia Grace Picking
on
January 27, 1965
by
Walter V. Barbash
Oral Historian
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

MISS PICKING: The city building stood at the site of the present Municipal building at the corner of 5th and Broadway Streets in the town of Abilene, which in later years was to become famous as the home of President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Dwight's class was large in numbers but not great in morale, as we knew we would be dubbed "greenies" by the upper classmen. The accommodations the building afforded were not the best but we managed. There was a large room on the east on the second floor used as a recitation room and study hall combined. In it we met for Chapel. On the southwest was a recitation room and another on the northwest. In this room from a cupola housing the fire bell the boys of A.H.S., Dwight among them, responded immediately by skipping classes to help man the old two wheeled hose cart—a far cry from our present truck with its snorkel. If Dwight didn't get to the hose cart he was among those who sprinted to the store to buy treats for the girls. On the first floor one room was used by History classes. Here Miss Pauline Sleeth taught Dwight. The city Marshall's family occupied the east half of the first floor. In the basement were the jail cells. One morning on arriving at school we found a prisoner had tried to dynamite his way out, the damage was not great enough to warrant a holiday. Dr. F.S. Blayney who often substituted as a teacher remarked that we received our education midst the howling of the dogs, the wailing of the prisoners and the odor of the onions being cooked for the Marshall's dinner. Dwight was a boy who worked and had a little time for parties and social gatherings, at least, during the Freshman and Sophomore years. He spent two years in the old city hall and two years in the new high school, erected in 1907. This building, facing the south on 7th street at the end of spruce has since been torn down. In Junior and Senior years, Dwight took a lively interest in athletics. The Yearbook of 1909, the Helianthus, gives the statement "D. Eisenhower sticks around the left and center gardens. He works to keep the team together and in good spirits." This characteristic as a youth followed into his military career. He was an individual of action. He was ever mindful of the welfare of his soldiers. His D-Day was the outgrowth of his early idea of cooperation. Another statement in the yearbook says "Dwight is our best historian and mathematician. His interest in History is one of his outstanding traits as a scholar." Mrs. C.D. Wetzel, a classmate, who was Winifred Williams, makes this remark; "I remember that whenever the teachers called on Dwight he could always recite. I never heard him say 'I don't know'." My most vivid memory is of his reciting in Miss Dickinson's English Class.

Pages 7-10:

PICKING: I do not recall the time of this injury but there is a record in the high school annual that Dwight was listed in the class that would have graduated in 1908. On account of this injury he was not allowed to go back to school and therefore started in the same year that we did so he was graduated in 1909. I wrote to Dwight, personally, concerning this and he said that he thinks that this is the correct history as far as he us able to remember.

BARBASH: Miss Picking, do you recall when you first met Dwight Eisenhower and what you impression was?

PICKING: Well, I haven't a very clear picture of Dwight in the first year. I have a better picture of Edgar, because Edgar was in my Latin class and coming from the country, Latin was most difficult for me and I know that Edgar thought it was quite funny when one would get a zero or a "goose-egg" each time and each day of recitation but in a few months I could make circles all around him so I remember Edgar, but I remember Dwight in the classes and particularly in our Junior and Seniors histories, and also, the physics class but, particularly, in the history classes.

BARBASH: Miss Picking, can you give us the location of the old high school that you and Dwight first attended and then the location of the new one, just for our records?

PICKING: The old high school was the city hall—it was a brick building with quite a dome on it—this housed the fire bell. It was at the corner of Broadway and 5th Street where the municipal building now stands. The new high school stood at the north end of Spruce Street. It faced the south and was just about a half a block off the Buckeye on Seventh Street between Buckeye and the Garfield School.

BARBASH: Miss Picking, you mentioned the fact that the boys in town were sort of a volunteer fire department so that when the firemen rang the bell they all left school and if the fire wasn't of any great importance they would spend the time to purchase candy for the girls—did Dwight—was Dwight part of the volunteer fire department and did he participate in these candy buying expeditions?

PICKING: Well, I don't know as I could recall a specific incident where Dwight helped to man this hose cart, but it was a rule that the boys were allowed to do this, and he probably was among them because he, as I stated, was a boy of action. Usually, the upper classmen had the first place.

BARBASH: Miss Picking, you mentioned earlier in your talk the fact that you had a daily Bible session in one of the rooms of the school. I wonder if you'd care to comment on this in light of the recent Supreme Court decision, that is, were all children of all religious faiths allowed to attend and what was the Bible that was used—was it a Bible of a particular religious group?

PICKING: I stated in my talk on Dwight that we had our chapel in the east room of the old city hall building and everyone was allowed to attend. The King James Bible was used a few, not too many comments on it. We, often, had a speaker who would give us a talk and then we, also, each time we had chapel repeated the Lord's Prayer. All religious faiths were included in this. They, at least, were there, if they were not allowed to take part that was quite all right and in the new high school we had a stage and I remember the teachers sat upon the stage and I, also, remember Mr. Stacey many times giving excellent talks based on the Bible and we learned to know the favorite scripture passage of each one of the teachers because they took turns in leading the devotions in chapel.

BARBASH: Miss Picking, there has been quite a bit of comment and reporting on the antagonism between the north side children and the children from the south side—I wonder if you could tell us at least, when you were in high school and a classmate of Dwight's whether or not you ran across this feeling and whether it made itself evident in any form.

PICKING: I feel that this has been quite a build-up for in our attending school we did not know a great deal or hear a great deal that Dwight lived south of the tracks and others lived north. Of course, I lived in the country—this may be the reason why I did not get the drift of that too often, but I have felt during the years that in those days south of the tracks and north of the tracks did not spell a great difference.

BARBASH: Miss Picking, you say you lived in the country when you went to school with Dwight. Did you have to, so to speak, commute to school every day or did you live in town during the school year?

PICKING: We certainly commuted every day. We would get up at 5:00 o'clock every morning, milk cows and get in the buggy and ride those four miles to school and go home again and do our chores and do our studying. My sister was valedictorian so you may know we put in good days. We used to sing our high school anthems and repeat our memory work going to and from school. We drove an old sorrel horse. He went to school for 10 years. We called him the "educated horse."

WORK, PLAY & ENTERTAINMENT:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Orin Snider
on
October 6, 1964
by
Walter V. Barbash
Oral Historian
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

This is an oral history interview with Orin Snider on October 6, 1964.

Pages 38-40:

MR.BARBASH: Did they call Ike "big Ike" or "little Ike" then—

MR.SNIDER: Yeah.

BARBASH: "Little Ike?"

SNIDER: "Little Ike."

ENDACOTT: Wonder where that name "Ike" came from?

SNIDER: I don't know how that ever started.

ENDACOTT: That was stuck on them from the very beginning and nobody seems to be able to tell where that came from.

SNIDER: I don't know—might have started at the creamery.

ENDACOTT: Could have.

BARBASH: You didn't work at the creamery with him, did you?

SNIDER: No.

BARBASH: Did you ever go up there and hang around like some of the other guys did?

SNIDER: I did when Ed was there—we used to go down and buy ice cream—buy a gallon and go over in the engine room and eat it.

BARBASH: What kind of work did Ike do there?

SNIDER: Pulled ice. Let's see—one of them did some firing.

ENDACOTT: That was Ike.

SNIDER: Was it?

BARBASH: Yeah, later on he did some.

ENDACOTT: He fired the boilers at night over there.

SNIDER: Yeah?

BARBASH: He, also, pressed butter, too, according to Mrs. Long.

SNIDER: He might have.

ENDACOTT: That "pulling ice" is hard work isn't it?

SNIDER: Oh, yeah, of course, they had those chain hoists to pull them up.

ENDACOTT: Yeah, but you had to pull on that chain, don't you?

SNIDER: Oh, yeah, you got plenty of exercise.

BARBASH: How about the story I heard recently that he fell in one of those ice cream buckets one time—did you ever hear about that?

SNIDER: Well, they fixed that trap up for Harry Rumbarger—Oh, Ike did fall in.

WORK, PLAY & ENTERTAINMENT:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Ivan M. Fitzwater
by
John E. Wickman and Maclyn P. Burg
on
February 1970 and May 28, 1976
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

Pages 6-13:

WICKMAN: No, I meant where did you live? I mean where physically in the town did you live?

FITZWATER: We lived with my grandmother, of course, as I mentioned before, just off of Buckeye on East Seventh Street. The house was the second house from what was alley behind Cleason Brown's home. My grandmother's house was the second house on the East Seventh Street east of Buckeye on the south side of the street. Now I can't remember the street number; isn't that something? It was a flat roof topped house (no inside plumbing).

WICKMAN: Well, is it the one that, the house A.L. Duckwall lives in now?

FITZWATER: Oh, no. No, it's not that one. It was on the other side of Buckeye Street from Uncle Lease Duckwall's home.

WICKMAN: East of Buckeye.

FITZWATER: Yes. At that time Cleason Brown lived on the corner of Seventh and Buckeye; high school's there now, I believe.

WICKMAN: No, junior high school.

FITZWATER: Junior high. And so that's were we lived from 1905 to 1909. And, oh, it was just a nice neighborhood bunch of young fellows to play around with. We had a great time, like

I mentioned. Playing shinny on Sundays, etc., and these kids weren't any angels, I wasn't either, but when we were out playing that way, really I never did see any smoking and no liquor, nothing of that kind. There might have been among some of them at other times, but not on those occasions. And we kids had a swimming hole up northwest of Abilene on Mud Creek.

[Interruption]

FITZWATER: Well, now, let's see, we were up at the swimming hole.

WICKMAN: We were talking about Abilene.

FITZWATER: About the swimming hole. That was quite a thing in the summertime there.

WICKMAN: Was that on Mud Creek?

FITZWATER: On Mud Creek. It seems to me it was up, oh, pretty well up there not too far from where the cemetery is, you know, that far up. And the creek was just right for we kids you know, depth and all. And I went out there one Saturday and I spent the whole day putting up a springing board for we kids. And the very next day I went out there and, before I got up to the swimming hole, I could see a bunch of people there, (no kids). And come to find out some fellow, I don't remember his name—he'd been drinking, it was brought out later—and he was going to show the boys how to make a dive. And he made a dive off of this springboard and he hit his head on the bottom of the pond and paralyzed him and he died within twenty-four hours. He was unconscious when I got there. And so I tore the springboard down, never used after that; spoiled it for us, you know. We kids could dive off of it and no trouble at all, and this fellow, if he hadn't been drinking, he probably would have been all right. But that was pretty sad. In the wintertime we kids did a lot of skating on Mud Creek. We'd skate, some of us, starting north of town, go clear down to the Smokey Hill River, many times, with our skates. And we'd build fires along the way, occasionally you know, to thaw out our feet and so on. And, oh, we had another swimming hole later when we were a little older, down on the Smokey Hill River. That was west of the power plant, Brown's power plant, Brown's power plant or mill they called it, anyway it was west of that, not very far. It was across the road from a family by the name of Ross. They had two boys; Ernie was the younger one, Harley I believe his name was, the older one. By that time I was night operator in the Bell Telephone long distance telephone office so my summer days were free, plenty of time for swimming.

WICKMAN: Now how old were you when you got that job?

FITZWATER: Well, I started in there in 1908, so I was sixteen. So in the daytime I didn't have to work at all; so I spent a lot of time in the swimming hole along with some of the others. Now this might be of interest to some of the folks there. This Bell Telephone office was upstairs over what was then Charley Townsend's drugstore; the location was 3rd and Broadway, where, I believe is [was], the Abilene National Bank, isn't it or one of the bank, is there, now.

WICKMAN: Yes, 3rd and Broadway.

FITZWATER: Well, it was on the corner. And there was an outside iron stairway to get up to this office, (telephone office). At that time, the local telephones and the long distance telephones are entirely separate—they weren't even connected, there was no way to connect them. If we got a call from someone in Abilene, we had to send a messenger out, if that person had a phone it wasn't even connected up, you see. It might interest some to know that long distance calls were limited to a distance of about 200 miles, after that, voices would just fade out. (That's the way it was at that time.)

WICKMAN: I see, did he have to come in?

FITZWATER: Yes. If a long distance call would come into Abilene for someone in Abilene, we'd have to get a messenger and send out and get them, see. Of course, I was on duty all night seven nights a week—had a folding cot, army type cot, you see. Sometimes I could sleep pretty near through the night, without interruption, and many times I'd be up maybe half dozen times during the night, you know, to answer calls and so on. I also had to relieve the day operator between twelve noon there and one p.m. every day and then Sundays. I had to work Sunday afternoons, as I remember to relieve the say operator. And let's see, what else--. While I was on night duty there, there was a livery stable that burned, which was on Buckeye between 3rd and 4th on the west side of the street, and I could look right out the window and see that, and that thing burned clear down one night and some horses were burned in that fire. I didn't know a thing about it till the next morning; I evidently hadn't been waked up during that night, you see.

WICKMAN: When did you first become aware of the Eisenhower family in Abilene.

FITZWATER: The first I remember of the Eisenhower boys, they were just—Eisenhowers, just another family in town, that's all. And the fact that they went to Lincoln School on the south side—I went to Garfield on the north side—we seldom came in contact with each other. So the first time I remember of the Eisenhower boys was when I'd go down and watch them practice football on this athletic field which was then in the block where the fire station is, or was, may be still that way. (I believe the Library is there now.)

WICKMAN: In age you were actually between what, the General and Milton? You're older than Milton but younger than the General?

FITZWATER: Well, the other boys, I didn't know any of them except Earl. Earl is the younger one, wasn't it Earl?

WICKMAN: No, Milton is the youngest.

FITZWATER: No, what was the one in the picture there that let his hair grow? Roy. I'm sort of mixed up as to Eisenhower boys, other than Big "Ike", Edgar, and little "Ike", Dwight.

WICKMAN: Roy, yes, he went to Junction City.

FITZWATER: Now Roy, of course he was quite a bit younger, younger then I, you see. But the other boys I didn't even know them, no. And somehow or other I just admired those Eisenhower boys; they were such wonderful athlete's, Edgar and Dwight, they were good in their playing; they showed good sportsmanship always you know; just plain type of fellows. And they weren't the only outstanding athletes in the high school at that time—of course, Herb Sommers was another one; he was catcher for the baseball team most of the time while he was in high school—probably one of the best that Abilene High ever had. So there were others that were outstanding too but something about these Eisenhower fellows that just, there was an attraction there somewhere. Well, Dwight, Little Ike they called him, he laughed a good deal, seemed to be a happy sort of fellow. I can remember that so well; about every time I'd see him, you know, he'd be laughing, kidding with the fellows and all.

WICKMAN: So then you really didn't know them until they got to high school, and you were all in high school at the same time, 1908 and 1909.

FITZWATER: No, I really didn't; I really didn't. Now in high school I was what you might say an athletic type, but I didn't go in for football. It got too rough for me. I was afraid that I might have an injury of some kind that might bother me the rest of my days; so I decided it wasn't worth it; so I didn't go in for football in high school.

Pages 38-44:

WICKMAN: Let's go back to Abilene for a minute. You want to tell me your badger story again; I think we ought to save that; I think that's one of the great stories.

FITZWATER: Well, now first of all I want you to know that this is absolutely true because (I was there).

WICKMAN: We can probably find it; I'm sure we can find it in the newspapers, you know.

FITZWATER: This is not hearsay. Oh, no, I was there, and I'm not making any of it up, this is absolutely true.

WICKMAN: About what was the date now?

FITZWATER: Well, of course to kids, dates didn't mean too much—

WICKMAN: Was it during the first time when you were in Abilene?

FITZWATER: Oh, the first time—

WICKMAN: The first time, O.K. You were somewhere between thirteen and sixteen?

FITZWTER: Oh, no, wait a minute. It had to be—it was before I went to work in the telephone office, and I worked there nights from 1908 on; so it was between 1905 and 1908; it had to be. So it was, I'd say, roughly guessing, about '05 or '06, along in there, because I wasn't too big a kid then. Well, this was to play a joke on the mayor, Abilene mayor. And to my recollection I think the mayor was Harry Litts at that time; I believe he was mayor. Now I wouldn't be positive, but I kind of think it was Harry Litts. Someone had a badger he'd captured, a wild badger, and they had a pen built in back of what was then the old Central Hotel, the back of it was on, oh, I don't know what street that is but anyway—I believe it was Spruce Street.

WICKMAN: Second and Broadway, didn't we say or—

FITZWATER: No, what you say, mention the hotel that's there now.

WICKMAN: The Forster Hotel.

FITZWATER: Well it was in that location, I'm sure. Well, anyway, the back of this hotel, the old Central hotel, the way it was then—

WICKMAN: That's Spruce, I guess.

FITZWATER: Yes, facing the street, the back of it, you see. So they had this pen built for the badger and had a chain on him and a doghouse affair built for him with, I kind of remember, old burlap or rag or cloth or something hanging down over the door so he could go in and out you know at will. And so it was publicized all over town—people talked about it you know. They were gong to have a dog fight the badger—somebody was going to furnish the dog and they were going to get in there on a certain day and they were going to have the dog fight this badger, and it was going to be quite an event. As I remember, this went on for a couple weeks beforehand. And I even think, I'm quite sure the Reflector, (who was it ran the Reflector?) was in on this badger dog fight.

WICKMAN: Charley Harger.

FITZWATER: Harger, I always thought that Harger was in on that too and my Uncle Lease Duckwall, I'd bank that he was in on it. But they must have been pretty good at keeping secrets, whoever arranged this, because it didn't leak out and I would have heard about it if it had. But it absolutely came as a surprise. Well anyway, the thing of it was they were going to honor someone by having him pull this badger out of his house when it came time for the fight, that was going to be quite an honor, whoever would do that. So they decided they mayor was the one to do that. So it came time for the badger fight, dog fighting the badger and, oh, gosh, drew quite a crowd—that street was just full of people—people sticking their heads out of the windows of the hotel and across the street you know, big deal for Abilene. And I was right up in front so I got to see it firsthand. So it came time to pull the badger out of the house, doghouse affair. And they told the mayor, "Now you're going to have to pull pretty hard because he's kind of stubborn, might have a little trouble getting him out of the.' So Harry Litts, (I'm quite sure it was Harry Litts), anyway the mayor, he gets a hold of the chain and gives it a real hard yank and here came, one of these old thunder mugs hooked on the end of the chain, came bouncing out you know, it was one of these old stoneware chambers with a side handle on it, the kind that people usually kept under the bed, they were sometimes referred to as thunder mugs.

WICKMAN: Chamber pots.

FITZWATER: Well, chamber, one story high but a wide one. It was made of old stoneware, glazed stoneware, one with a handle on the side. And that was hooked on the end of the chain and the badger was gone. Now those businessmen, some of them, went to all that trouble just to play a joke on the mayor.

WICKMAN: Was this sort of thing very common in Abilene then, where people would play practical jokes on each other?

FITZWATER: Well, a bunch of businessmen, at that time business pressure wasn't anything like it is today, you know; they had time for a little fun once in a while. And my Uncle Lease, he had a sense of humor, he never lost that even when he was the busiest, you know. So I'd be willing to bet that he was in on that' I bet that he was in on that; I bet that he furnished the thunder mug.

WICKMAN: You talked earlier about a skating rink, Parker's skating rink.

FITZWATER: Yes.

WICKMAN: Where was that located?

FITZWATER: Well, it was located on the second floor of one of the Parker Merry Go Round factory buildings; it was on the

[INSERT PAGE 43 HERE WHEN KIM GETS A COPY]

WICKMAN: Smoked the cigar while you were skating?

FITZWATER: No, I wasn't smoking, just chewing it. And I didn't feel so good so, oh, gosh, I couldn't figure out what was wrong. And it finally dawned on me it must be that cigar. So I got rid of it, but it was too late—I waited to long. And so this being on the second floor, you see, people were coming in, I couldn't get anybody to take my skates off, oh, I had to get out of there in a hurry and so I clunk, clunkety, clunk, I rolled all the way down the stairs to get out in the open. By then it was too late, I was really sick boy; I was really sick for several hours. That was my first experience with a cigar, didn't smoke it at all.

WORK, PLAY & ENTERTAINMENT:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with
Mr. L.J. Asper
by
Walter V. Barbash
on
March 20, 1964
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

Page 1:

BARBASH: Mr. Asper, please identify yourself and tell us what your relationship to Dwight Eisenhower is.

ASPER: My name is Asper and I was just a good friend of Eisenhower's and a neighbor. I lived about five blocks from his place. I chummed around with him quite a bit—fished and hunted, played ball and different things like that.

BARBASH: Mr. Asper, where was your house located in relation to the Eisenhower family home?

ASPER: It was south about three blocks and east about two blocks.

BARBASH: Mr. Asper, can you remember when you first became acquainted with Dwight Eisenhower?

ASPER: I believe it was in 1903, the year of the big flood. We used to go fishing together quite a bit—left a lot of water in some of these old riverbeds. They were full of carp and different things and we used to do a lot of fishing together and I believe that was the first I remember of being around Dwight.

BARBASH: Did you go to grammar school with Dwight Eisenhower and do you remember anything about those years?

ASPER: I went to grammar school the same time he did on the south side but I don't particularly remember anything about him. He was two years older than I was—I didn't hang around with the big bunch very much.

Page 15:

BARBASH: What position did he play in football and how well did he play it?

ASPER: Well, I'm not sure but it seems to me like it was guard or tackle that he played but, Ed, I think played in the back field. I'm pretty sure that Ike played in the line some place. Oh, he was a pretty good football player—about like the average.

BARBASH: Mr. Asper, you said once that when you were a younger boy here in town that you used to spend some time at the Eisenhower home over night or weekends. In that matter, do you remember any interesting incidents at that time or what the occasion was that you spent at the Eisenhower home?

ASPER: Oh, I don't remember particularly what the incident was, but kids used to once in a while stay overnight with each other. I had a tent down at my place and they used to come down there and stay all night with me—sleep out in the tent and we used to steal cherries and stuff like that out of the cellar—canned cherries, and we'd have something like out at our camp and we'd cook out own meals and stuff like that. I remember one time the Eisenhower boys brought a can of cherries down there and they had never been pitted and we got to eating cherries and spitting the pits out all over the ground and next day my mother was out there around camp and seen all these cherries seeds—she got kinda suspicious wondering where they come from. I guess she went and talked to Mrs. Eisenhower about it, but, oh we never got too much about it.

WORK, PLAY & ENTERTAINMENT:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
John H. Long
on
January14, 1966
by
J. Earl Endacott
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

This is an interview taken on January 14, 1966, at the Eisenhower Museum. The interview is made by Mr. John H. Long, of Hood River, Oregon, who was in Lincoln School for two years and two years in Garfield School with General Eisenhower.

Pages 6-7:

ENDACOTT: How did Ike get along with his teachers over here at Lincoln—all right?

LONG: Got along fine. In the eight grade I sat, we sat in the northeast corner. Ulysses S. Brown, a colored boy, sat behind me and I sat next and Dwight sat in front of me and that colored boy behind there was smarter then either one of us. He was a Sunday school teacher and he usually would get Dwight and me to come down and do the hard work. He was the State Sunday School secretary—

ENDACOTT: That's right, my sister-in-law worked for him.

LONG: And he was only home on Sunday's, weekends, and he taught my Sunday School class so we would go down there, Saturday's, lots of times and do his work. Well we had these potatoes to pick and were out there picking potatoes and it got kinda late and Mud Creek come along and I told Earl that the ice was off every six or eight feet off each side, you know, so there was a good place there and Ike dared me to jump in to take a swim and I looked at Dwight and he was taking off his clothes and so was I.

ENDACOTT: You both went in?

LONG: We both went in, broke the ice and went in but we didn't stay long and I got out and went home.

ENDACOTT: I bet you had goose pimples for a week, didn't you?

LONG: He took my dare.

ENDACOTT: He always did that, didn't he? He was quite a fighter—you give him a dare and he generally took it.

LONG: He liked to take a dare.

WORK, PLAY & ENTERTAINMENT:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with
Reverend Ray I. Witter
by
Walter V. Barbash
on
August 28, 1964
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

BARBASH: Rev. Witter, now we would like to go into your connection with the Church in this area and particularly, of course, with Dwight Eisenhower, could you tell us when you first became acquainted with Dwight Eisenhower and how?

WITTER: Well, I could tell—I can't tell the year, but it's just like cousins get acquainted nowadays. Our folks contacting one another, he lived here in Abilene and I lived on the farm southeast 10 miles, and when my folks came to town, I'd meet the boys and played with them, then, they came out to the farm every chance they got. It was one of the highpoints of their joy in boyhood days to come out to the farm and enjoy farm life so this runs back as far as I can remember when we were just young boys.

BARBASH: Rev. Witter, when you came to town to visit with the Eisenhowers, did you spend any time at the home and what sort of things as young boys did you do?

WITTER: Well, I, occasionally, spent a weekend there, a few days at the longest, and times were not dull, we were boys—we had live times. We played everything from baseball, hide and go seek, and dare base and all those games of the past and I remember one time when we—when the older boys made some candy, we got sick of the candy and all those common games—common to boys and girls were—done everything from pouring water to snowballing if it was that season of the year and anything in general that was common to youth—we engaged in it.

BARBASH: Rev. Witter, you say you remember playing ball with Dwight Eisenhower—was this in the younger years or was this when you were in high school and if it was high school. Can you remember what kind of ball player he was?

WITTER: No, this was out boyhood years, we used to play down there on the Lincoln School ground and I wasn't in high school up here but he was a common ball player like the rest of us.

Pages 25-27:

BARBASH: Rev. Witter, what was a visit like that Dwight and his family made down to your folk's farm, what were some of the things that were done and some of the incidents that took place?

WITTER: Well, I don't remember the whole family ever being there, for several reasons, they just had a road wagon and old bay horse called "Dick" so usually, it was the boys who would come or a parent occasionally but usually the boys would come. There wasn't a getting together by families, I think, due to the conveyance possible, largely, and those were always great days when we got together on the farm or I could get up here to Abilene seems as though those boys delighted in getting on the farm, enjoying nature, enjoying the livestock and the methods of farming and all those environments, hunting—they loved to hunt, so these were some of their common interests.

BARBASH: Rev. Witter, do you remember any amusing or interesting incidents that took place when the Eisenhower boys visited you at the farm?

WITTER: Yes, these will always be remembered with me, I, well, remember one time when the corn was being laid by the last cultivation when it was up there—tall, and Dwight and I were to watch the horses while my father went in to get a drink, we were close to the house, it was threatening showers and clap of thunder came—father always had spirited horses, so this team started off down the row and I had the lines and Dwight had the shovels, it was a walking cultivator, he had the shovel handles, but he couldn't keep the plow out of the corn, we hoed off straight and clean. Then again I well remember, when they were out there and our other cousin, Beulah Musser, was there and we got into a water fight, there was so many on each side, we'd grab buckets of water and douse each other—one side had the water tank and didn't need to pump their water but the other side only had the well on their side and they had to pump that water but it was cold and when you'd catch one out to a side why you'd run up and give them a bucket of water right, in the face or all over them, we were wet and the ground was wet, we had quite a great time that day. I remember Beulah Musser one of the opposite group—met her coming around the corner of the building there with a whole bucket full of cold water and they let it go right in her face—she had to gasp for breath for a little—but those were high times. One of the high points of interest was we used to have a pond and we boys would play in the water there—we had no bathing suits, just nature's cloths, and one day it was hot and we were in and out and in and out and we sunburned ourselves we blistered our backs so bad that the skin peeled off and that next day we were laying in on the dining room on the floor moaning, and groaning and rolling in our misery. I remember the time I visited Dwight at the White House, I asked him whether he remembered that time—he said "I'll never forget that". He hadn't forgotten that blistered back and I never have either.

BARBASH: Rev. Witter, as Dwight Eisenhower and the rest of the Eisenhower boys grew older and went on to high school, did you attend high school here in Abilene with them?

WITTER: No, I didn't attend. They wanted me to come so I could be on the ball team but father needed me on the farm so I couldn't come in and join them here in high school.

WORK, PLAY & ENTERTAINMENT:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Abram Forney
on
May 13, 1964
by
Walter V. Barbash
Oral Historian
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

Pages 8-9:

BARBASH: Mr. Forney, could you, please, tell us when you worked the creamery with Dwight Eisenhower and could you tell us any interesting incidents that took place while you worked there with him?

FORNEY: I remember an incident during school vacation when I was employed on the second floor of the building and nailing together butter boxes. I happened to come down through the engine room to the wash room which was on the ground floor. On returning to the second floor I had stopped on the first floor to talk to D.J. Eisenhower—a little conversation—and as we parted he went through the door into the boiler room and I started to return to the second floor. As I stood at the landing going up to the second floor there was this terrific noise. The governor belt on an engine which operated all the churns and the power elevators in the building broke and, of course, there was the engine just "running away" with such velocity that the fly wheel which was about 6 feet in diameter exploded. Portions of that flywheel had broken a steam line, and also, hit one of the ammonia pipes which turned the ammonia pipes loose. I remember very well, standing on that landing, that the first thing I saw was Mr. Eisenhower coming back in and cutting off the steam. This engine was still running, although all it was, was the shaft. He cut off the steam from that ran over and cut off the ammonia from the ammonia tank. Fortunately, if this had happened approximately 10 seconds sooner and where I was standing right in front of this engine talking to Mr. Eisenhower I don't think I would be here today to tell this story.

BARBASH: Mr. Forney, do you remember what kind of work Dwight did at the Creamery and did you ever have an opportunity to work with him?

FORNEY: Well, there was one summer during school vacation that both operated what they called the "ice tank", by taking out 300 pound blocks of ice and dumping and setting them through a chute into the ice room and Dwight had the night shift at that time. I had day shift. His salary was 32.50 and I was given 35.00 a month on the day shift. I had considerably more work to do serving the delivery trucks and the people from outer communities who came in here to purchase ice.

COMMUNITY:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Ivan M. Fitzwater
by
John E. Wickman and Maclyn P. Burg
on
February 1970 and May 28, 1976
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

Pages 4-5:

WICKMAN: When you first went to Abilene, since you were thirteen years old, you may have some memories of first arriving in town, what kind of town was it?

FITZWATER: Abilene, well just one of the nicest places that I ever lived in; it was then. I can tell you, it was just, just a nice place to live.

WICKMAN: Busy town?

FITZWATER: Oh, yes—

WICKMAN: With commercial activities?

FITZWATER: Yes, and so many nice people, oh, we didn't have any slum area. There were several colored families in town, but we never had any trouble with them, as I remember.

WICKMAN: Which side of town did they live in?

FITZWATER: Well, sir, can't tell for sure, maybe if I would drive around I could tell; it was kind of the northwest part of town; it wasn't in the south side, no, no. It seemed to me it was the northwest part of town where most of them lived. And they seemed to like to be among their own kind, and I never heard of one of them ever being in jail. And, by the way, I don't know if Abilene had a jail or not, they must have had. Oh, they must have had one but I can't remember for sure.

Pages 44-45:

WICKMAN: I was wondering, do you remember, surely on your way down to the Smokey Hill or somewhere you must have had a general area around Lincoln School. What was that area like besides—I mean, the Eisenhower home was behind the school, the school was on the school grounds—but what was the general area like down there? Was it homes, or stores, or—

FITZWATER: Oh, most homes.

WICKMAN: Homes along there.

FITZWATER: Yes, I think that must have been some of the older part of Abilene, maybe not necessarily so. But they were not shacks, no, it wasn't that way at all, no. In fact Abilene didn't have any real, you know, shantytown or area; we didn't have it. There were some poor families here and there, but respectable. No, Abilene south of the tracks, well, just as nice people lived down, as the ones who lived on the north side it seemed to me, as I remember.

COMMUNITY:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Orin Snider
on
October 6, 1964
by
Walter V. Barbash
Oral Historian
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

This is an oral history interview with Orin Snider on October 6, 1964.

Page 15:

ENDACOTT: Ike didn't date Gladys Brooks as much as Edgar did, did he?

SNIDER: I didn't think either one of them because Gladys Brooks was kinda one class above them—that is, socially.

ENDACOTT: Yes, she came from the north side.

SNIDER: No, she wasn't north of the Union Pacific tracks.

ENDACOTT: That's right she wasn't—she lived down here.

SNIDER: But—she was top class and Ike was kinda middle class.

ENDACOTT: Dave Wilkie told me one time that as far as he knew Ike never did have a date with her.

SNIDER: I wouldn't know. I heard that she went back east, some kind of a doings when he was in West Point—she went to some kind of social affair.

ENDACOTT: I didn't know that.

SNIDER: I think it was just before she married Brooks—she was on this—not vaudeville—

ENDACOTT: Chautauqua?

SNIDER: Yeah.

Pages 17-19:

BARBASH: How about the other places in town that Ike worked?

SNIDER: I never knew of him working.

ENDACOTT: I don't know that Ike worked too many places.

BARBASH: Well, there's a story goes around that he worked in a grocery store here in the south end some place.

SNIDER: If he did, I didn't know anything about it.

ENDACOTT: Well, where was there a grocery store down in here?

SNIDER: Theodore Nusz.

ENDACOTT: Well, that's clear up there by the tracks.

SNIDER: Yeah, that's about three or four blocks.

ENDACOTT: That's the only grocery store that they had—I had a fellow in this morning over there tried to tell me that there was confectionery store and ice cream store over here where the school was and I told him he was crazy.

SNIDER: Where?

ENDACOTT: Where the Lincoln School is—was there ever a confectionery store anywhere around there?

SNIDER: Well, there wasn't anything after 1890. I tell you where there was a store, is over here where that machine place is.

ENDACOTT: Over here?

SNIDER: Yeah. Just south of it—just south of the track about 100 feet and next to buckeye. There was an ice cream parlor and later a grocery at Southwest 4th and Cedar. Joe Abith had the ice cream parlor and Cecil Baker the grocery.

ENDACOTT: Was that a grocery store?

SNIDER: Yeah, a little grocery store. I know—cousin and I went in one time and tried to rob it—stuck our fingers out to a man and says, "your candy or your life."

ENDACOTT: And he gave you candy?

SNIDER: No—he grabbed us by the collars and threw us out. My uncle said that we were the "James boys."

COMMUNITY:

ORAL HISTORY REVIEW
with
John F. "SIX" McDonnell
by
J. Earl Endacott
on
February 26, 1970
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

This is an interview with Six McDonnell by J. Earl Endacott, February 26, 1970.

Pages 20-22:

McDONNELL: Yes. He [Joe Howe] was a wonderful man. You know I lost my father early and—

ENDACOTT: Yes, you were a youngster when your father died.

McDONNELL: Yes. I was playing in a vacant lot there next to our place, you know, and Mr. [A.L.] Duckwall, Lease Duckwall—

ENDACOTT: Lease, yes.

McDONNELL: --and Joe would always walk home together. They walked in those days; nobody had a car—maybe one or two—but they would walk home. They were both businessmen, and they would walk quite a ways. It was ten or twelve blocks up there to their home really. I think they lived on seventh and from their business it was about a mile.

ENDACOTT: Well, let's see, Lease he lived up at seventh.

McDONNELL: Yes.

ENDACOTT: Yes.

McDONNELL: And Joe lived along there somewhere eighth or seventh. They lived close by, that" one reason they walked home together, I guess. But anyway, we'd be out there playing ball practically every night, and they'd stop and look at us for five minutes or so. And Joe called me over and he says, "You're a pretty good ball player, what's your name?" And I told him what my name was and he says, "Well, we like to watch you play. And I said, "Well, thank you." And he says, "Would you like a job?" I said "A job, yes, I sure would, have you a job for me?" And he said, "Well, I run a newspaper. You come down to my place tomorrow morning and we'll see what we can do." I think I was in the seventh or eighth grade. And so I went down and he hired me to sweep out, open up in the mornings, build the fires—had two or three stoves, big bellied stoves, no furnace—nothing but a basement. The big press was in the basement. And I put little gasoline lamps of some kind under all the little job presses, to heat up the presses, to get the ink warm enough so it would be fluid, you know, light a little lamp down there and sweep out. And then it would be about time for the regulars to come, so I'd have to go to school see. He would pay me by the line and he was cheating himself all the time and I knew it, because during school, I'd make about five dollars a week. I'd set that legal stuff, the real fine type, by hand and I got so I was real at it, you know. Just pick it up like that and stick it in. And he'd figure up what I earned, just galley proofs you know, and he'd pay me $4.80, 4.86, 4.94, always pretty close to $5.00. The journeymen printers were only getting $12.00. And heck, I was only working you know, an hour, an hour and a half a night, and a little bit in the morning. And I was making almost half as much as those guys who were working 48 hours. So he was being a little partial to me and it was a big help, you know. Especially when my mother died and well, no she didn't die, she went to Nebraska and lived with her daughter, and then I was all alone.

Page 52-55:

ENDACOTT: Where did the Hardings [Gladys Harding] live; did they live up on the north side?

McDONNELL: No, they lived on Enterprise Street, Enterprise Avenue they called it.

ENDACOTT: Yes.

McDONNELL: They lived, oh, about five blocks east of Buckeye.

ENDACOTT: East of Buckeye on Enterprise.

McDONNELL: It was down on Enterprise, yes, past the old court house about five blocks on east.

ENDACOTT: Didn't Ruby Norman live down—

McDONNELL: She lived a little farther, yes.

ENDACOTT: She lived further down.

McDONNELL: Yes, that's right.

ENDACOTT: I'm glad to know that; I can't find out where the Harding's lived.

McDONNELL: Well, the Harding home was just north, by the way the crow flies, from C.W. Parker's layout down there. It was down south a ways. The rink—I can remember it, I can see it—from Enterprise Avenue. The Callahan girls, do you remember them?

ENDACOTT: Yes.

McDONNELL: Well, they lived right across the street from Hardings' they lived on the north side of the street.

ENDACOTT: What did Ruby Norman's father do?

McDONNELL: He dealt in livestock.

ENDACOTT: That's what I thought; he bought and sold horses and cows.

McDONNELL: That's right.

ENDACOTT: Yes. Now she married Ralph Lucier.

McDONNELL: That's right.

ENDACOTT: And she gave me a picture here several years ago of Ike, that she took in Chicago, when he was on his way to West Point. She was kind of stuck on Ike and she was out with the Chautauqua [Lecture Series or boat?].

McDONNELL: Well, so was Gladys Harding.

ENDACOTT: Yes.

McDONNELL: Gladys Harding and Ruby were close friends.

ENDACOTT: Yes, but—

McDONNELL: But Ruby was stuck on Ike too, huh?

ENDACOTT: Yes, oh, yes, he has a lot of dates with her. When we went to the inauguration, Ralph Lucier and his wife were walking down the street, and we went to the inauguration with them. And she was telling me how she and Ike used to date all the time. She was a good looking girl, I guess.

McDONNELL: Ruby?

ENDACOTT: Yes.

McDONNELL: They were both good looking.

COMMUNITY:

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Abram Forney
on
May 13, 1964
by
Walter V. Barbash
Oral Historian
Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
Abilene, Kansas

Page 6:

BARBASH: Mr. Forney, when you were growing up in Abilene, did you have very much contact with Dwight Eisenhower?

FORNEY: There was a situation in Abilene, which divided the town very much socially. The people who lived on the south side of the tracks were a group that stayed pretty close together and the same thing applied to the people that lived on the north side of the track. To finish the grade school Dwight went to the Garfield School—7th and 8th grades—and finished his grade school on the north side of the track and, of course, the social gatherings were mainly classroom-wise. Each class had it's own activities and, having been two years older, I happened to be two classes ahead of Dwight in school, so I can't say very much as to further association with Dwight.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

INTRODUCTION:

Dwight D. Eisenhower served two successful terms as President of the United States from 1953 to 1961, as popular when he left office as when he was elected. As Supreme Allied Commander of the European Theater of Operations in World War II, he became the greatest hero of his age. Today, more than a half century later, it is difficult to imagine the adulation and affection the American people—and much of the world—felt for him. The story of his life is a fascinating one that begins in a small town in the heartland of nineteenth-century America. Here he matured into a bright, popular, handsome, and exceedingly ambitious young man, destined to become what Stephen E. Ambrose describes as "a great and *good* man." The influences that shaped his upbringing were common enough in Midwestern America one hundred years ago: a profoundly religious family, the public school system, work and friendships, and the community of Abilene, Kansas, itself. To truly know Dwight D. Eisenhower, it is necessary to go back and recreate, as best as we can, his early years in Abilene, Kansas, through his own words, primary sources, and the memories of those who knew him then. It has been nearly a half century since "Ike" was overwhelmingly elected to the presidency—longer still since his name became a household word in World War II—and three decades since his death, but the lessons that an examination of his life reveals are timeless in their ability to teach us still. It is important that students continue to learn about Dwight D. Eisenhower, an American who dominated his times as few others have and emerged as one of the true giants of the twentieth century.

THE DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER SERIES:

Funding for this project was provided by the Annenberg Foundation and the State of Kansas. The materials included are intended only as a starting point to learn more about the fascinating life and times of our 34th President, Dwight D. Eisenhower. "Dreams of a Barefoot Boy: 1890—1911" is the first in a series and focuses on the boyhood years in Abilene, Kansas. As students investigate the five social history themes of the unit (Home & Family, Church & Religion, School & Education, Work & Play, and Community), they will begin to uncover for themselves what it was like to grow up in a small, Midwestern town one hundred years ago. This curriculum unit contains two posters, background material for a general overview of small-town life in 1900, primary sources linked to each of the five themes, suggested readings from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends* by Dwight D. Eisenhower, teaching activities, and additional resources. A much large collection of primary sources may be accessed on the Eisenhower Center's web site at http://www. eisenhower.utexas.edu. The Eisenhower Foundation would like to know about your teaching experiences using these materials.

TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES:

The use of primary sources as an extraordinary method for learning history is gaining converts with each year. For students, the inclusion of primary source materials in the curriculum is often their first opportunity to discover that history really *is* a fascinating subject! Experts insist that the introduction of primary source materials into the curriculum should begin early, in the elementary grades. Letters, diaries, photographs, oral histories, and artifacts are powerful catalysts for igniting student curiosity about the past. At each step along the way, they can't help but begin to formulate the questions that propel them to search for answers which, in turn, lead to even more questions. Students themselves begin to piece together the puzzle of history. By actually "doing history," they are drawn naturally into the process of inquiry, searching, observation, analysis, and interpretation. Primary sources have the power to transport us back in time, to make the people and events live again.

TEACHER PREPARATION:

1. Read as much as you can about the life of Dwight D. Eisenhower and the period of American history from the end of the Civil War until the outbreak of World War I.
2. Ask your school librarian and local historical society to help you put together a collection of resources for a "Learning Center" for this unit. Include nonfiction, reference materials, videos, slides, a vertical file, computer programs, posters, maps, documents, and artifacts.
3. Take the time to become familiar with the materials and try out the activities yourself before you use the unit with students. Consider introducing "Dreams of a Barefoot Boy: 1890—1911" by sharing your own experiences and discoveries with the materials.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify and explain the significance of the influences on Dwight D. Eisenhower's boyhood years in Abilene, Kansas, one hundred years ago.
2. Describe the personality and character of Dwight D. Eisenhower as a boy and as a young man.
3. Compare life in a small, Midwestern town in 1900 with life today.
4. Explain that "what is history" is an ongoing, ever-changing process.
5. Appreciate the importance of primary sources in the study of history.
6. Demonstrate analytic and interpretative skills by using primary source materials to understand history.

NOTE TO TEACHERS OF YOUNGER STUDENTS:

For younger elementary students, it will be necessary for the teacher to read or summarize the background material and readings. A storytelling format is one idea for relating the suggested readings in *At Ease: Stories I Tell To Friends*. As the class works on the primary sources for the unit, consider transferring the documents and photographs to overhead transparencies. As a group activity, guide the class through the most basic of the questions on the Primary Source Evaluation Sheet. The Learning Activities can be adapted to younger learners and provide a starting place for the teacher's own ideas. Younger students will be captivated by the stories in *At Ease: Stories I Tell To Friends*, the oral histories of Eisenhower's boyhood, the photographs, and *Appleton's Readers*.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HISTORY:

"Dreams of a Barefoot Boy: 1890—1911" addresses many of the National Standards for History and is linked to them. A copy may be obtained online at www.eisenhower.utexas.edu/ or by calling or writing the Education Specialist with The Eisenhower Foundation. Kansas teachers may obtain a copy of the unit's links to The Kansas Curricular Standards for History through the same process.

THE EISENHOWER FOUNDATION:

The Eisenhower Foundation is a 501(c)3 public foundation established in 1946 to accept the Eisenhower family home on the death of Mrs. Ida Eisenhower. The Eisenhower Center, family home, and first museum was founded in 1952 by the Foundation prior to the establishment of the presidential library system in 1954. The mission of the Eisenhower Foundation is to honor Dwight D. Eisenhower, perpetuate his important legacy, encourage and support educational activities relating to citizenship, and support the non-federally funded operation of the Eisenhower Center.

THE EISENHOWER CENTER:

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Museum, Home, Place of Meditation, and Visitors Center make up the Eisenhower Center. The mission of the Eisenhower Center is to acquire, preserve, and disseminate the records and material culture relating to the history of Dwight D. Eisenhower and his times through research, exhibits, public programs, publications, and outreach.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HISTORY

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER: Dreams of a Barefoot Boy addresses the following national standards for history through its background material, primary sources, learning activities, and readings from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*. It is particularly supportive in developing an understanding of historical thinking.

National Standards for History (K-4):

- Standards in Historical Thinking:
  - Standard 1. Chronological Thinking
    - A. Distinguish between past, present, and future time.
    - B. Identify the temporal structure of a historical narrative or story.
    - C. Establish temporal order in constructing students' own historical narratives.
    - D. Measure and calculate calendar time.
    - E. Interpret data presented in time lines.
    - F. Create time lines.
    - G. Explain change and continuity over time.
  - Standard 2. Historical Comprehension
    - A. Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative.
    - B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage.
    - C. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses.
    - D. Read historical narratives imaginatively.
    - E. Appreciate historical perspectives
    - F. Draw upon data in historical maps.
    - H. Draw upon the visual data presented in photographs, paintings, cartoons, and architectural drawings.
  - Standard 3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
    - A. Formulate questions to focus their inquiry or analysis
    - B. Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas, values, personalities, behaviors, and institutions.
    - E. Compare different stories about a historical figure, era, or event.
    - F. Analyze illustrations in historical stories.
    - G. Consider multiple perspectives.
    - H. Explain causes I analyzing historical actions.
    - I. Hypothesize influences of the past.
  - Standard 4. Historical Research Capabilities
    - A. Formulate historical questions.
    - B. Obtain historical data.
    - C. Interrogate historical data.
    - D. Marshal needed knowledge of the time and place, and construct a story, explanation, or historical narrative.

Standard 5. Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making

- A. Identify problems and dilemmas in the past.
- B. Analyze the interests and values of the various people involved.
- C. Identify causes of the problem or dilemma.
- D. Propose alternative choices for addressing the problem.
- E. Formulate a position or course of action on an issue.
- F. Identify the solution chosen.
- G. Evaluate the consequences of a decision.

Standards in History for Grades K-4:

Topic 1: Living and Working Together in Families and Communities, Now and Long Ago

Standard 1: Family life now and in the recent past; family life in various places long ago.

1A: The student understands family life now and in the recent past; family life in various places long ago.

Standard 2: The history of students' own local community and how communities in North America varied long ago.

2A: The student understands the history of his or her local community.

Topic 2: The History of Students' Own State or Region

Standard 3: The people, events, problems, and ideas that created the history of their state.

3B: The student understands the history of the first European, African, and/or Asian-Pacific explorers and settlers who came to his or her state or region.

Topic 3: The History of the United States: Democratic Principles and Values and the People from Many Cultures Who Contributed to Its Cultural, Economic, and Political Heritage

Standard 4: How democratic values came to be, and how they have been exemplified by people, events, and symbols.

4B: The students understands ordinary people who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.

Standard 5: The causes and nature of various movements of large groups of people into and within the United States, now, and long ago.

5A: The student understands the movements of large groups of people into his or her own and other states in the United States now and long ago.

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